

THE EXPOSITORY TIMES.

Notes of Recent Exposition.

ONE great need of to-day is the voice of a Prophet, a Word of God out of the midst of the smoke and flames of the world conflict. You will hear such a word in the little book of sermons by Canon F. R. BARRY, *I Heard a Voice* (Christophers; 1s. net). These four sermons were written and delivered in conditions of critical danger, the second on the night when the preacher saw his home in flames, and the others amid similar experiences.

The sermons have the note of urgency, as all prophecy has. But they have more. They bear a great testimony to truth that is made alive by the events of our time. They contain a Word of God that comes to us from one who speaks it out of profound conviction and a sense of its deadly necessity for our people. No one can read these sermons without being deeply moved by the passion, sincerity, and appeal of the preacher. It is impossible in a brief summary to reproduce this impression, but we will do our best to say what the message of this little book is.

The first sermon is entitled 'The Word of God,' and its burden is that God speaks to us always. We are often indifferent to it. We cease to hear it. But we are brought back to it by life. To-day we are facing real things. We are returning to an absolute loyalty which is the secret of our strength. We are listening to a Voice which, unless the Bible is a vast mistake, is speaking in the storm and the battle. It is the voice of the living God who is at work in the events of history, working out through these His righteous purpose.

No insurrection of the power of evil dethrones Him. He speaks in judgment, and in warning that material power alone can avail nothing as the foundation of a human world, with hope and promise that in the heart of sacrifice we may find the triumph of a Resurrection. Sacrifice? The heroism of poor folk in London, and other towns and villages, will be an epic while our race endures. But it is more than that. It is the token of the presence and the power of God in the hearts of ordinary men and women.

But let us realize that to-day there is a war within the war. The conflict in Europe runs back into the eternal background, the unseen realm of spiritual reality. The whole moral order is involved. It is the conflict of ultimate loyalties in the souls of men, the conflict between good and evil, literally between God and Satan. We are beginning to understand the language of the New Testament to-day. We know that what they had in mind was something horribly and intensely real, the spirit of anti-Christ, the Man of Sin 'who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God and worshipped.'

And in particular we are beginning to understand 'that haunting book which we call the Book of Revelation.' It comes startlingly alive to-day; and the obscene horror of aerial warfare fits into its sombre apocalyptic imagery. It was written, remember, in a concentration camp. The naked power of a Totalitarian State was trying to root out the Christian Church as the home of spiritual

freedom. It was not content to hold men's earthly loyalties; it wanted their souls too, which belong to God. And in this Totalitarian paganism John saw the contemporary embodiment of the cosmic battle between Light and Darkness, Truth and Lies, Slavery and Freedom, the Hope of Christ and the despair of anti-Christ.

But this is the theme of the whole Bible. It is also the innermost meaning of history. There is an ultimate conflict between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of the Beast. Nazi-ism is a symptom nearly as much as it is a cause. It is thrown up out of the dark depths of mass-resentment; into it has been poured all the revengefulness and hate and cruelty of frustrated men who have failed to find the true end of living, who have sought and found in a perverted loyalty the satanic substitute for true religion. The fight against this is in the end the 'War in Heaven.' That is the real battle, and the victory in that battle is the condition of peace.

This is a point on which Canon BARRY insists with tremendous earnestness. The real war is in the soul of man. It is in the soul that the victory must be won. The war has got to be waged on two levels—in the world of history and in the world unseen—in the actual clash of armies and in the secret places of the soul.

And therefore to win this war means not merely to defeat the aggressor's hosts. That must and will be done. But it means more—the positive creation of a social order ruled by the faith of Christ. That is surely the Word of God to Britain. 'The kingdoms of the world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign for ever and ever,' prophesied the Apocalypse. And it is our part to see this realized. Because the victory is in the soul, because it is the 'war in heaven,' therefore it is the victory of righteousness and justice and that peace which comes only when the will of God in Christ is done. It is this which alone will ennoble and redeem this conflict.

on to deal with the freedom which is everywhere set down as the issue at stake in the world. This freedom, he says, is not merely the absence of restriction. It is a creative quality of living which may be proved in discipline and hardship and which may be realized, we are beginning to see, within a self-disciplined community of mutual service and responsibility. We are finding a new positive ideal of a social order fashioned by free men as part of a world order of free peoples. It demands brave constructive social building to embody the vision which is being granted to us. And that is not a task for the future, 'after the war.' It is part of the war; we must be at it *now*.

For if we are 'called to freedom' this is what we stand for. In everyday speech we refer to it as Democracy. But what we mean by that is a great deal more than a system of government. What we mean is an attitude to life, an ideal of manhood, a religious faith. That is what Hitler cannot understand. Nobody can understand Britain who does not know that the things we care for most, the things we will die for rather than surrender, have been nurtured and sustained by Christianity. Our tradition is woven out of many strands; but it is woven upon a Christian background, and when it is torn away from that it dies. We might retain a political democracy which would be quite as soulless and sterile, as blind to the real needs of men, as any Totalitarian collective.

And therefore we must concern ourselves now with the things that count. We cannot make free nations out of unfree men. And to make free men we must use the instruments at our hand, which are Christian education and the Christian Church. Canon BARRY makes a strong appeal for a national education that is really religious. 'Are you content that your children should be educated with no knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, armed with no philosophy of life but a half-baked belief in natural science and with no ideal beyond trivial pleasures? What kind of a Christian country shall we have then?'

Canon BARRY develops this further when he goes

And with equal earnestness he pleads for a new

loyalty to the Church. The spiritual, he says, is nearly meaningless until it is expressed in the material. Spirit must make itself a body through which it can act upon the world. That goes very deep into Christianity. And that is the real meaning of the Church. It is a great Society; it is nineteen hundred years of stored-up history; it has its roots deep in a common life. We shall not keep true religion alive in England by listening to addresses on the microphone; only by enlisting in its army, only by joining in its serving company.

If politics are not to degenerate into a mere struggle of naked power, the greatest need of Democracy is a living Church. It is the one thing in God's providence which can heal the hurt of a world racked by war, and gather torn mankind back into unity. Not since the collapse of the old Christian empire has it been offered a mission so magnificent. Is the Church ready to rise to this? to be alive enough to care more for bringing people *in* rather than for shutting them out? to be Christian enough to see the one big thing that unites us and the little things that divide us? If out of this war we do not find Christian unity, then God help the churches—no one else will.

Dr. C. Ryder SMITH, formerly Professor of Theology in the University of London, who has written a number of books of expository theology, offers his readers a study of the Atonement in his recent work, *The Bible Doctrine of Salvation* (Epworth Press; 7s. 6d. net).

This book is the product of the author's own study of the Bible, which has been long and intimate. There are no references to other books on the Atonement, nor is the author's doctrine of the Atonement compared with the doctrines, such as that of Anselm, that have appeared in the history of Christian thought. The doctrine which he seeks to uphold is what he calls a 'societary,' by which he means what is usually called a 'corporate,' doctrine.

Finding the chief Old Testament contribution in the Prophets, he makes much, in support of the 'societary' doctrine, of the large and varied use in the New Testament of the Servant Songs of Isaiah, more especially the fifty-third chapter. There is evidence, in quite a number of the New Testament books, as he has little difficulty in pointing out, that this last of the Servant Songs became part and parcel of Christian thought.

In He 9²⁸ we read of 'Christ' being 'offered to bear the sins of *many*.' In He 13²⁰ we read of 'the God of peace' having 'brought again from the dead . . . that great shepherd of the sheep.' In 2 Co 5²¹, a verse which belongs to the greatest of Paul's passages about the Atonement, it is written, 'He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin.' In Ro 4²⁵, where Christ is spoken of as 'delivered for our offences,' there is a direct reference to the fifty-third of Isaiah; and Dr. Ryder SMITH finds also a direct reference in the connexion in Ro 4²⁵ of justification with resurrection.

There are also references to the Servant Songs, and in particular to the fifty-third of Isaiah, in the Fourth Gospel. There the concepts of suffering and victory, which are the ruling ideas of the last of the Servant Songs, are seen to be associated. In three passages (Jn 3¹⁴ 8²⁸ 12^{32, 34}) the phrase 'lifted up' occurs. In two of the three passages the name 'Son of Man' appears with the term 'lifted up,' and in the third the writer thinks that he has written, 'If the Son of Man be lifted up,' when he has not done so (Jn 12^{32, 34}). This shows how closely the two ideas of the Son of Man and 'lifted up' went together in his mind. And we may confidently say that John identified the Son of Man with the Servant. So that under the Johannine terms 'glorify' and 'lifted up' the same two ideas of triumph and suffering combine as in the last Servant Song.

The societary or corporate idea is here held to be fundamental in the Bible doctrine of Salvation. It is implied throughout the Bible that God has made man to live in fellowship with Himself. At

first outwardly conceived, God promising to give prosperity to Israel if Israel will obey Him, this fellowship is ultimately expressed only as 'eternal life,' which is to 'know'—to be intimate with—God. There is only one thing that can mar the fellowship. This one thing is sin. But God cannot leave a sinner to his sin. The Father still craves fellowship with His children. He therefore sets Himself to save them. To save men from sin the Saviour must, at one and the same time, be sinless and experience what is meant by sin. This is what fellowship demands of a Saviour.

The societary doctrine, as our author goes on to say, being in terms of fellowship, knows nothing of a God who waits in anger, or even waits aloof, for some one else to do something. He 'sends' the Son, and He welcomes the sinner. There is an antinomy involved here, and this must be freely allowed.

For the rest, the societary theory is no doubt inadequate, as earlier theories have been, but it is claimed for it that as being essentially psychological it is in line with the dominant thought-forms of to-day and is looking in the right direction. It has also the merit, like other psychological theories, of returning to the New Testament way of approach to the doctrine of salvation.

No one can travel far in the regions of philosophy without coming up against the problem of Time. Mysterious Time, it flows on unceasingly, but what does it flow through or past? Is its flux only a delusive appearance without reality? Is it simply *Maya* as Eastern thinkers affirm? Or is it an essential element of the real world, and, if so, in what relation does it stand to that which is eternal?

Such questions are not of yesterday. They perplexed the minds of the ancient Greek philosophers, and at a later time Augustine confessed that, while he knew what time was, yet if asked to define it he could not. Within recent years the problem of time has been approached from a new angle, in accordance with the latest speculations of mathe-

maticians and physicists who now co-ordinate time with space and declare physical reality to be a space-time continuum. It is in harmony with the spirit of the age to base philosophy upon the findings of physical science, and so a consideration of the relation of time and eternity sets out from a study of the clock-time of the physicist in its relation to space.

The speculations of Mr. J. W. Dunne in his two books, 'An Experiment with Time' and 'The Serial Universe,' have recently brought the subject before the popular mind. He argues that, as in dreams the mind of the dreamer escapes for the time being from the limitations of the present and can roam freely through the past and even in some cases forecast the future, so it may be assumed that at death the soul finds permanent escape from the limitations of the body and gains such a mastery over time that it is able to range at will through the past and the future, reviewing all experience. According to this theory the past and future both exist, being spread out like a great film ribbon along which the emancipated soul is able to pass at will 'with the velocity of light.'

This most difficult and obscure subject has been dealt with in a fresh and suggestive way in a book recently published, *The Eternity of Time*, by the Rev. A. P. SHEPHERD, D.D. (Hodder & Stoughton; 8s. 6d. net). The main thesis of the book would appear to be that time is really eternity veiled from our eyes by the limitations of the flesh. While agreeing with some of Mr. Dunne's conclusions Dr. SHEPHERD has certain criticisms to make. In particular he argues that Dunne assumes the fourth dimension, which is a purely mathematical device, to be a factual reality, and thereby 'confuses space and time and spatializes time.' There is good ground for this criticism, as any one may see. The mathematicians for their own purposes have co-ordinated space and time by assuming that time may be measured by the distance covered by the speed of light in that time. But they are under the necessity, for a reason that need not here be explained, to multiply this time-co-ordinate by the square root of minus one. Now a minus quantity

indicates negation or absence, as any one in possession of minus-a-five-pound-note will understand. Also the square root of minus one is a wholly unimaginable quantity. Therefore what the mathematicians really say by their symbols when strictly interpreted, is not that time moves with the velocity of light, but that time moves with an unimaginable function of the negation of the velocity of light! A statement which leaves us in profound ignorance of the relation of time and space. Yet it is common enough in popular expositions to find time expressed in direct terms of the speed of light, and Mr. Dunne has fallen into this snare.

In his exposition of the theme Dr. SHEPHERD makes much use of the psychology of the unconscious. As we travel on in time we each of us acquire an increasing content of experience which becomes a vital part of our being. These experiences may pass from our memory but they are all securely embedded in the depths of our unconscious self. They powerfully influence our conduct and indeed may be said to make us what we are. All this, of course, is commonplace to those who are familiar with the new psychology, but it is here set down in a vivid and impressive way. Dr. SHEPHERD has much that is wise and wholesome to say about the futility of thinking that the past is over and done with. The past is as vital a part of ourselves as the present; the unconscious is as really existent as the conscious. The accumulated content of our experience, past and present, has to be reckoned with, for it determines our destiny.

At this point in his exposition Dr. SHEPHERD makes a great leap from time to eternity. 'What I postulate is that all the experience of a self is its own eternal possession, inherent in itself. It is even now recoverable by memory, through the association of ideas, and under hypnosis it can be vividly re-experienced. It will be completely available for re-experience when the self is released from its present inevitable preoccupation with the material world.' This, it will be observed, is a postulate, not a proof. It fails completely to meet the argument of the man who says that the experiencing self with all its accumulated experiences,

when torn from its environment, simply ceases to be. Dr. SHEPHERD uses the illustration of an imaginary water-plant with both a surface and an underwater life which, when fully developed, might no longer draw its life from the surface, from the sun and air. 'Its surface life withers and "dies" and the new organism moves away freely under the water, in which it had formerly only grown at a fixed rate and attached to the surface life, which had been, as it were, the matrix of its developing being.'

This may be pictorial, but it is certainly not logical. It may be helpful to the imagination, but it carries no conviction to the reason. And if it be offered as in any sense a proof or demonstration of 'the eternity of time' it can only be pronounced to be inadequate. The Archbishop of York in a Foreword makes the cautious statement, 'This book, by calling in the evidence of recent psychological study, builds a bridge from clock-time to Eternity which looks to me more likely to carry traffic than any other bridge across the chasm which I have seen.'

Can any such bridge across the chasm be built? It may be doubted. There is manifest in our day a certain hankering for some sort of *gnosis* which shall supersede faith, some scientific proof or demonstration which shall place the reality of the eternal world beyond dispute. The prevalence of spiritualism and the popularity of Mr. Dunne's books is evidence of this. But still the Eternal guards its secret, and will continue to guard it till the veil is lifted by a hand from the other side. Sir Arthur Eddington has pointed out that the fourth dimension is utterly unimaginable and that no amount of mathematical study can ever make it imaginable to us who are three-dimensional creatures. So it may be confidently affirmed that as long as we are in the stream of time the conditions of the life eternal must be to us inconceivable. The crown of the life of faith is to die in faith. Of the fathers it is written, 'These all died in faith,' and it may be safely said that no future generation will find in psychology or any other science a bridge to cross the chasm or any surer vessel in which to make the final voyage.

Spiritual Problems and the War.

VI. The Moral Use of Force.

BY THE REVEREND PROFESSOR A. J. GOSSIP, D.D., GLASGOW.

THIS whole question can, of course, be debated upon general grounds. In our own day, for example, the idealist view of the State has loomed up again, and holds the passionate adherence of half the world, to which it is the only real religion, the primary conviction, believed and practised, as Hitler says, with the enthusiasm and even the frenzy of a religious crusade. That theory lays it down that what we, in the democracies, call our liberty is, in reality, misbegotten licence, outraging the whole purpose of our creation and being, and ruinous even to ourselves. For, it is held, a man can rise to the fullness of his own personality, can know life to be called life, only by spending himself in complete self-forgetfulness and self-surrender for something bigger than himself, to further the interests of which he exists, and only in the growth and splendour of which he can find his own completeness and self-realization.

So far that might be sound Christian teaching. For Christ, too, holds that one can find his life only by losing it for something greater than himself. But doubt as to this idealist view crowds in when we are further told that this 'something' is what Hegel called 'the divine idea as it exists on earth—the State.' Can any State claim the unrestricted obedience we must and can offer God? More than an evil spirit, rather the best and sanest in human nature, might turn upon such demands and say, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?'

But Germans, for example, soaked in such a view from infancy, accept it as a thing of course, and so glory in what seems to us an intolerable servitude; do not at all resent restrictions and compulsions and sheer brutal obscene force which we esteem incredible inroads on the first rights of human nature; argue that such compulsions and limitations as the State lays upon them do not really cramp and constrict their lives, but, on the contrary, are the only machinery whereby these lives can be fully lived out; look pityingly at us who, they judge, have lost our way among our own petty self-interests. Do you never, they might argue, feel, as your own Wordsworth felt

Me this unchartered freedom tires;
I feel the weight of chance-desires;
I supplicate for thy control?

Never agree with your own Francis Thompson's jingle:

Hardest servitude has he
Who is jailed in arrogant liberty;
But freedom, spacious and unflawed,
Who is walled about with —

'God' was what the poet wrote. But to them man's chief end is to glorify the State; and in so doing only can he find lasting enjoyment.

Pushed the lengths to which they push it, that may seem to us a throwback to very primitive thought; to the days when 'the person in the singular number' had not been 'de-universalized,' as Hegel said, out of the mass; had but a vague conception of himself as a unit; thought, and even worshipped, tribally. For a personal religion is a comparatively recent appearance on the earth; and even to-day masses of men exist who have not caught a glimpse of it. In his interesting study of Christian Mass Movements in India Mr. Pickett points out that 'the typical Hindu villager does not think of himself as an individual at all, but as a member of a group. Ask him who he is, and he will tell you not his name but the name of the caste. To address him in the singular is to insult him. He resents any suggestion that he is by himself a man apart.' And Germany to-day appears to have resiled to that, to feel that the 'de-universalizing' process has gone much too far, was in its essence a mistaken route to take at all. 'Surely,' says William James, 'the individual, the person in the singular number, is the more fundamental phenomenon, and the social institution, of whatever grade, is secondary and ministerial.' Not so, claims the idealist theory. Rather, as Laski admirably summarizes it, 'individual freedom means obedience to the law of the society to which I belong. When I say that I am seeking to realize myself I mean in fact that I am seeking to be one with the order of which I form a part. I am not independent of, or isolated in, that order, but one with it and of it. As it realizes itself, so am I also realized. The more fully, therefore, I serve it, the more fully do I express myself. True liberty is thus so far from being an absence of restraint that it is essentially subordination to a system of rational purposes which receive their highest expression in

the activity of the State. When I obey the State, I obey the best part of myself.' Hence force and State compulsion raise no moral questions in the mind at all.

But Hegel's view of the State is not the only foundation of Nazi-ism. There are also the Nietzschean ethics, and, notably, Fichte's principles of education. According to these last the pupil must from infancy, cut off from all knowledge that other views exist at all, have his mind so continually worked and moulded and coloured and obsessed by the conception that he exists to serve the State that in time the idea will never even blow across it that he has any personal interests at all. The finished article is a mere robot which thinks and acts and lives as the State desires, instinctively, mechanically, automatically. For twenty years that fearsome force has been playing continually on young Germany; and to-day there is a generation of such robots, coldly efficient, ruthlessly brutal, blindly obedient to the most horrible of orders. Long ago Ignatius of Loyola preached that *excaecatio*, self-blinding, an unrestricted putting of one's mind into the keeping of the Church, so that, if it said that what one saw was black was white, then one must hold that it is white, and that that self-mutilation was the one road to salvation. And now Nazi-ism so mutilates its unhappy abortions. Says Goering, 'Just as the Roman Catholic feels about the Pope, so does the Nazi feel about the Fuehrer—what he says is final truth. It is not for you to think but to accept.' Well may Dawson, in his fine book, *Religion and the Modern State*, declare 'the great danger we have to meet is not the danger of violent persecution'—though that too has arisen from its ancient grave, and sprawls obscene and horrible over the earth more grossly than it has ever done before—but rather that of the crushing out of religion from modern life by the sheer weight of State inspired public opinion, and by the mass organization of society upon a secular basis. For the first time in the world's history the kingdom of anti-Christ has acquired political form and social substance, and stands over against the Christian Church as a Counter-Church, with its own dogmas, and its own moral standards, ruled by a centralized hierarchy and inspired by an intense will to world conquest.' Faced by such a force, subtle, insidious, ceaselessly active, many a plain man has determined in his soul and will that he can die if need be, but that to this monster he will not bow down.

None the less some force there must be. Brunner, for example, in *The Divine Imperative*, approaches

the question from a very different angle, laying it down as a first axiom that the State is essentially an evil thing (a necessary evil, he concedes, due to original sin), still evil, and sub-Christian, and indeed anti-Christian, because an organized selfishness, built upon force and brutality, not on love and persuasion, and greedy to extend its sway, not only over its own sphere, but to claim all life as its province, even that inner sanctuary where it has no right or might, and must be met with the blunt words 'one must obey God rather than men.' Yet this imperfect thing is necessary if there is to exist an orderly life at all, or any chance of progress—is necessary to keep peace within its borders, and to erect a dam lest chaos and aggression burst in from without. And, to preserve that peace, and to prevent that anarchy and chaos, it must possess the use of force, must on occasion even be prepared to kill, if it is not to be flouted and mocked by resolute wrongdoers. If laws are to be laws, and not just good advice which one can take or leave, the right to use force is a first necessity, and in due cases killing for the State is moral.

So the Master of Balliol, in his *Two Moralities*, argues that while one of these is for the saints, a challenge to perfection that soars above all rules, the other is the laws of the game to which the ordinary man can meantime rise, and to which he is meantime willing to submit. From him you can't ask more because he can't give more, 'and moral rules are of no use unless they are generally kept.' 'These are not judgments of how we think people ideally ought to behave,' they are simply 'the conduct the decent average man is prepared to act up to.' Between these two moralities there seems to be a clash; and often people feel that to a Christian Society all rules below the standard of the Sermon on the Mount ought not to be there at all. 'But in Society, as it exists, there is no choice between having rules, and being abandoned to lawless anarchy, where force and violence reign triumphant. If we love our brethren we must desire, for their sakes, that there should be rules, and that the rules should be real, and, therefore, in the name of love, we are bound to see that the rules should be observed.' Hence force again.

Law, for example, is not an outrage on the Christian Ethic, rather a strong defence, behind which the weak things of the world have found shelter and their chance. When we are told loftily by Ernest Scott that 'it might fairly be argued that the world would be happier if we had faith to act literally on the teaching of Jesus, and leave all justice to God,' a wise man, for once, talks foolishly.

For centuries the Border country was a hectic and weary land, with never a hope of progress, and no security or settled peace.

They have burned my little lonely tower
They had not burned it for a year or more !

At long last, things had been settling down, and then again it came ! And once more all was misery and smoking ruins and still forms on the hillsides, time after time for centuries, till men rose up in wrath, aye and in love to their unfortunate fellows, and hanged the miscreants who worked this woe : and now, for generations, there has been a settled smiling countryside, where men can live their lives in peace. And would it have been right to let the old wild, mad disorder last from age to age ? Force there must be, aye and the use of it, or 'chaos has come again,' and Christ's laws cannot be lived out.

Such speculations lead one far afield. But let us seek to take a more restricted, yet, perhaps, a higher flight. For us Christians the teaching and example of Jesus Christ is final. As Wordsworth said, what a great man effects for the world is this—he does something no one ever thought of doing before, but which, once it is done, becomes a standard for the rest of us, below which we can't rest content. That is true of many things, a motor car, for instance. And what the New Testament does is to bring us face to face with Jesus Christ, and say, There is a life that has been lived out ; and, if you have any spiritual sensitiveness in you at all, you must feel that that, once done, has become a standard for you, below which you can't rest content, but must strain towards it, henceforth satisfied with nothing less. And thus the imitation of Christ in thought and conduct is a very real part of Christianity. But it must be worked out with skill and knowledge, founding, not upon some selected facts which happen to appeal to us, but on all the facts faced honestly and squarely, evading none, or else our portrait and conception of Him may be a mere caricature of Christ, in some ways over-developed, in others under-exposed. Proof texts, wrenched from their context, and not laid side by side with others, no less authentic, telling in the opposite direction, have wrought ruin and confusion beyond reckoning. 'I am not come to send peace but a sword,' for example, had in its original setting nothing to do with war ; but, so I take it, is a vivid summing up and metaphor of the persecutions and the broken homes which the advent of Christ must mean in a world hostile to Him and His. Certainly it is a metaphor that means something—and that surely this—that to

Christ peace is not the greatest thing in the world. If righteousness and Christianity mean broken homes and misery, well these must come. But, in its primary setting, it had nothing to do with war. One may apply it and extend it to cover that, but if so, one does it at one's own risk. But then no more had that proof text upon the other side, in its original setting, anything to do with war ! 'Resist not evil' was spoken to the individual, as the plain context—very startling even about individuals—makes clear. You may apply to war this saying also ; but if so, again you do it at your own risk.

What is needed is to take as our standard the whole of Christ, not merely this and that, while leaving other facts, as really there, in shadow ; and especially His central principles, and the manner in which in differing situations He Himself applied and lived them out. That last was very far from uniform. Where we go wrong is thinking of Christ as a legislator, as giving us a set of rules, a railway time-table for our journey through life, a book of the words appropriate for each occasion that can confront us. That is precisely what He would not do, what He despised the Pharisees for attempting to do. He gave not rules but principles, which we must work out and apply under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in differing ways in differing circumstances, as He did Himself. That may entail a fearsome risk for bunglers such as us, an onerous responsibility. Yet even Christ cannot contrive to spare us that, and happily we have been given to guide us how to apply the principles in varying situations His own conduct and example.

Take, for example, the Law of Love, that central Christian affirmation, or the Law of Forgiveness, so central, so insistent, so heavily and strikingly underlined in our Lord's teaching that it becomes one of the most original parts of it. 'If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses,' so that 'the Unconditional Freeness of the Gospel' proves to be an idle phrase. There is a blunt condition, and it cannot be evaded, must be met. Yet how did Jesus Christ Himself live out these principles ? Often and often—on the Cross, but in many other places too, His love for the most hopeless and impossible, His refusal to meet hate with hate, His stubborn, persistent, obstinate forgiveness where we would flame out into anger gives us our standard. And He is imperious with us about it. Less than this will not do. But there are other passages in plenty where Jesus blazed into a fierceness of anger, into stinging, withering, blistering words that can't be matched in literature, and that scald even to this

day. 'Ye serpents,' 'ye generations of vipers,' 'ye whitewashed sepulchres,' 'ye children of hell.' It does not sound particularly loving, nor yet as if He had forgiven them. Yet He would not desist from this tremendous vituperation, would not agree to let the Pharisees alone and speak of other things, pursued them with His stinging words, and died rather than cease from it. Did He, then, in these places break His own laws, fall miserably below His own standards? Montefiori feels He did regarding the Pharisees. Kind to others, even publicans and sinners, why was He so fierce to them, worthy, if mistaken men?

Well, what is the answer? Are we to argue, or feel silently in our own spirits that, whereas on the Cross Christ lived out His own principles up to the very uttermost, in these scenes we have indicated He fell far below Himself, lost His temper, acted un-Christlike, and so huddle these unfortunate slips and failures of His out of our memory? Is it not wiser to take as our standard of what Christlikeness really is the whole of Christ, and to assume from His example that, if there are places where, if we are to be loyal to Him, we must show the spirit He showed on the Cross, there are others where, if we are to reflect His mind, we must be moved to an implacable and burning anger. To some of us Christ did not only now and then rise to the fullness of His stature, and upon other occasions act in a way that stumbles and distresses us, but in each circumstance as it arose He lived out the right and perfect thing to be done there and then, was just as Christlike when His eyes were blazing ('and he turned and looked on them with anger') as when He said, 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.' Which surely means, Law of Forgiveness and Law of Love and all, that there are situations in which to be Christlike one must be burned up with an intensity of a clean anger; when, as Mackintosh puts it, 'lack of indignation at wickedness is a sign, not of a poor nature only, but of positive unlikeness to Christ. The wrath of Jesus is made incontestably plain in the Synoptic Gospels.'

From all which it is but a step to the Cleansing of the Temple, which, whatever else it is, shows plainly that, unless Christ Himself was on occasion the poorest of Christians, there come times when the Law of unlimited Forgiveness, laid on us as the usual rule of life, has to be laid aside; when, if we have His spirit in us, we cannot, and we should not, stand passively watching wrong heaped upon wrong, but must take action. Pathetic efforts have been made to tone down, to explain away, to

eviscerate what, if it had been recorded of any other character in history would, as a matter of course, have been accepted as the scene of violence and drama that it obviously was. Yet there it stands; and we must face it; and must take account of it; one of the facts, as surely there as Calvary itself, to find its due place in an honest portrait of the Master, and of His law of life for us. 'There is that in Jesus,' said Raven in *Jesus and the Gospel of Love*, 'which would horrify the pacifist and humanitarian. He is the lover of men and their physician: but at need and for love's sake He will use the knife.' I do not know if Raven has withdrawn this; but, in any case, the facts on which he founded it remain within the Gospel records staringly as ever.

And if Christ's anger was so roused over an act of sacrilege, and the sins of the Pharisees, what would He not have said and done when, as Niebuhr says, 'a nation, its fury fed by a pagan religion of tribal self-glorification, intent to root out the Christian religion, defies all the universal standards of justice which ages of a Christian and humanistic culture have woven into the fabric of our civilization, threatens the Jewish race with annihilation, and visits a maniacal fury upon these unhappy people; explicitly declares its intention of subjecting the other races of Europe into slavery to the master race; in short, is engaged in the terrible effort to establish an empire upon the very negation of justice.' Faced by that situation, am I wrong in looking to the Temple to learn what my Lord would have me do? This thing, He said, must end, and He rose up and put them out.

Or take the Law of Brotherhood, that central Christian rule of life. Usually it means kindness and sympathy to all our fellow-men. But when and if some of our brothers persist in maltreating certain others of our brothers, and will not desist therefrom, then what does one do? Does the Law mean that, because the wrongdoers are our brothers, we must be patient and unruffled towards them, protest perhaps, but take no violent action to check and arrest them? Have the wronged brothers got no rights? Have they not the first call upon the Law of Brotherhood? Can we obey it and allow them to be maltreated? 'But who is my neighbour?' asked a captious mind. 'I'll tell you a story and you'll answer that yourself,' said Christ, and improvised the immortal parable about the Priest and the Levite and the good Samaritan. 'Who was neighbour to him that fell among thieves?' 'He that showed mercy,' said the man. 'Precisely,' said Christ. 'You go and do likewise.' The setting of the story as Christ told it is that the outrage was

over, and the victim lying there half murdered. But suppose the various travellers had passed a little earlier, when the assault was being committed. What then? Would the Priest and the Levite, in these circumstances, have been right to pass by on the other side; justified not to mix themselves up in a messy business? After the crime, the Law of Brotherhood meant kindly and unselfish treatment of the victim. But, while the assault was proceeding, how could one prove one's brotherhood to him, and how could one be a neighbour and show mercy, except by a lusty resistance to the foot-pads, and by rallying to their victim's support? 'If,' says the Master of Balliol, 'when we are told to "resist not evil," we are being told to have nothing to do with that maintenance of rules which resists evil, then we are being told something which is incompatible with loving our neighbours. That is the real point at issue between those who do, and those who do not, accept these particular verses literally.' And let us always remember that nothing so hurt the Master in His disciples as a certain wooden literalness of interpretation. Again and again one sees how sorely He was grieved by that.

In a recent *Hibbert Journal* Professor Hearnshaw strings together what, in mass, amount to an amazing series of admissions by distinguished Pacifists. As, for example, to quote one or two. My own notable colleague, Dr. Macgregor, admits that Christ 'might even allow the use of the sword in self-defence against bandits.' But go that length, and surely when bandits leap upon an unsuspecting people, the Law of Brotherhood must rally us to defend them too. 'If any one attacked my wife, I should sock him on the jaw,' said Dick Sheppard; and, again, 'I should do my very best to protect my wife. I hope I should not kill the attacker, but I might.' But if all this for his own wife, does not the Law of Brotherhood demand a like defence of other people's wives from us? And Bertrand Russell. 'You will not repudiate force completely: you will not, for instance, refuse to protect a weaker individual from a stronger one, if you happen to be present when the assault is

committed.' But if such an assault is practised upon half the world, with a ferocity of insane fury, does one simply stand aside, or does the Law of Brotherhood urge one to protect weaker things there too?

How can one keep the central Christian principles and not defend the injured?

Some unhappy ones, like C. E. Montague in the last war, believing that all use of armed force is against the mind of Christ, and yet, impelled by their consciences to defend the threatened sanctities of life, had with deliberation to turn their backs upon Him in this one matter—a hideous dilemma. I myself sat one night in the trenches talking to a mystical Highland private who so felt, and that night he was killed. And when the dawn came I buried him in what was then the desolation of Tyne Cot, and when the burial squad had dispersed, 'Greater love,' said I to Jesus Christ, 'hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.' So Thou hast said. But this man, so he believes, has laid down his eternal destinies for them. And I leave it with Thee.

A terrible dilemma! But there are some of us who, with Christ's contempt for neutrals in our mind; and with His own example as to how His laws are to be kept put burningly before us; and, above all, His own solemn asseveration of what He counts the standards by which we must stand or fall, can't see how we can refuse at times to use force in His name. For if not to feed the hungry, not to clothe the naked, not to visit those sick and in prison, seems to Him to prove we are remote from His whole mind and ways, how shall He look at us if He has in the end to say, I was persecuted and you paid no heed, I was enslaved and you looked the other way, I was broken and tortured and massacred, and you, My feet, did not hurry to My help; and you, My hands, did not leap out in the one way that could have helped; and you, My body, failed Me! Where was your love, your brotherhood, your Christlikeness? In as much as ye did it not to the least of these My brethren, ye did it not to Me. Depart from Me ye cursed.

Literature.

THE REVELATION OF ST. JOHN.

THE aim of the Moffatt New Testament Commentary is to bring out the religious meaning and message of the New Testament writings. As a convenient basis for such a commentary the text is given in the form of Dr. James Moffatt's New Translation. The method of the commentators is to cite the various sections or passages of the writing in their original order, following up each section or passage with a running comment. The commentary has been written, so far as possible, for the 'Greekless,' but we know it has been welcomed by many who do not 'keep up their Greek.' It would have added to the size and price of the volume, but we think it would have been at once helpful and convenient if the section or passage under comment had been cited both from the Authorized Version and from the New Translation.

With the recent publication of *The Revelation of St. John* (Hodder & Stoughton; 10s. 6d. net) the Moffatt New Testament Commentary is nearing completion. The writer of this volume was to have been Sir Edwyn Hoskyns, but after his death the task was undertaken by the Rev. Martin Kiddle, M.A., Vicar of Christ Church, Harrogate, and Lecturer of Leeds Parish Church. Mr. Kiddle has been assisted by Mr. M. K. Ross.

In a useful Introduction Mr. Kiddle would make the point that John's interest was strictly pastoral, first and last. If his meaning is often obscure, it is largely due not to his peculiar mind but to our ignorance of the apocalyptic thought-forms of his age. And perhaps sometimes he had to be intentionally cryptic, because of the danger of his book falling into enemy hands.

Another point Mr. Kiddle would make is that it is quite inadequate to think of John from a merely literary point of view, as editing a composition derived from older materials. He was primarily a Christian prophet whose message was of the supernatural terrors in which the world was about to be drenched and to disappear, though it is not surprising that he adapted his visions to the conventions of the contemporary apocalyptic.

As for the question of authorship, here as throughout the volume Mr. Kiddle is cautious and non-committal. He may justly describe the enquiry into authorship as 'exuberant,' but does he justly describe it as 'sterile'? In any case all he himself

allows is that while the author of 'Revelation' is not the Fourth Evangelist, he may well be the Apostle John. He adds, however, that 'the authorship of "Revelation" may prove the one mystery of the book which will be never revealed in this world.'

On the abiding value of 'Revelation' Mr. Kiddle speaks wisely. John was a prophet in the strict sense of the word, but it was the immediate future, and not times other than his own, that absorbed his attention. And though his prophecies were not fulfilled, the spiritual principles he laid bare are eternal in their significance. The evil which threatened the Christian Church at the close of the first century is inherent in civilization itself, 'a poison at the very heart of this world order,' but it is being eternally judged and condemned, and they upon whom it lays its oppressive hand should be uplifted and encouraged as they give heed to John's message.

We shall only add that the running comments are clear and straightforward and admirably fulfil their explanatory purpose. W. FULTON.

LUDWIG FEUERBACH.

Heaven Wasn't His Destination (Allen & Unwin; 8s. 6d. net) is the curious title of a sympathetic exposition of the thought of Ludwig Feuerbach. It is by William B. Chamberlain, who is well versed in the German and French literature on the subject. His book was first presented to the University of Geneva as a doctoral dissertation. It is not only the product of much learning but shows marks of great ability. It is, however, not altogether effective in exposition. Nor is it free from a tendency to extravagance. One would not quarrel with the author for his genuine admiration of Feuerbach, but surely there is a point too rhetorically put when it is said, 'When Feuerbach died, there was no rejoicing in heaven, for it had ceased to exist.' One is tempted to observe, heaven may not have been Feuerbach's destination, but it may well have been his destiny.

The author's object is twofold: 'to pay humble tribute to a little-understood philosopher whose stature grows with the years, and in so doing perhaps to provide a key to the question of religion and personal immortality for those who reject philosophical idealism and a personal God.'

The attempt is made to show the relation of Feuerbach to Hegel on the one hand and Marx on the other—'son of Hegel, father of Marx.' His influence upon German literature is illustrated with reference to Herwegh, Gottfried Keller, and Richard Wagner. His general philosophical views are also expounded. But the main value of the book is its analysis of Feuerbach's most important work, his discussion of religious thought in 'The Essence of Christianity' (Mr. Chamberlain does well to quote from George Eliot's translation).

It is not easy to analyse the work of one who is here described as a 'mad painter' rather than a 'skilled draughtsman,' but the author succeeds with the aid of learned and well-timed comment in presenting us with a definite impression of the views on religion and destiny of this self-styled 'philosopher of the common man.'

In what way, asks the author, is Feuerbach important to the man in the street to-day? It is because he told us that we ourselves have made our gods, that the feelings we thought divine in origin are human feelings. It is because he told us that it is vain to be preoccupied with another world, that we must settle to the tasks to which we are called in this world.

It is reassuring to reflect—the late Dr. Oman worked out the point in a fuller context—that whereas with Feuerbach religious experience has its psychological source in feeling and is an illusion, with Schleiermacher religious experience having its psychological source in the self-same element of consciousness is a reality.

W. FULTON.

BAPTISM.

The Origin and Significance of the New Testament Baptism, by the Rev. H. G. Marsh, M.A., B.D. (Manchester University Press; 7s. 6d. net). We have had a good many books dealing with the Sacraments, and especially the two mentioned in the Gospels. But these books almost generally slide off into a discussion of the Lord's Supper. We have had comparatively little attention paid to Baptism. This neglect is repaired by Mr. Marsh's book which is a very thorough piece of work by a man who knows his subject so well that his investigation is flexible and invariably interesting.

The subject needed impartial study, for the rite in ordinary use tends to be either magical or merely ritual and of no special importance. This is regrettable, because at the beginning the rite was administered by evangelists and apostles who believed that the recipient obtained something

which was spiritually real and essential. There is, perhaps, as Mr. Marsh urges, no uniform doctrine on baptism in the New Testament. But this does not mean that the ideas of baptism were chaotic. In its earliest form it implied an *experience* which was symbolized by the performance of a rite. And it was the experience, not the rite, which was important. The rite itself had no 'fixed interpretation.' But it did stand for certain things which were part of the Christian life—a complete break with the past, forgiveness of sins, the entrance into a new covenant, and the gift of the Spirit. 'The Apostles,' writes Mr. Marsh, 'accepted John's rite and introduced it into the Church in the form of the predicted Spirit baptism, but their teaching leaves us under no misapprehension and proves that it was the spiritual experience, not the act, which was of supreme importance.'

Did the Early Church practise infant baptism? Mr. Marsh gives a decided affirmative answer. He points to the solidarity of family life among the Jews, to the fact that paganism at that period found a place for children in its cults, to the baptism of households (Lydia, the Philippian gaoler, Crispus, Stephanas), and other considerations. But this subject occupies a secondary place in the writer's survey which deals at length, first with John the Baptist's rite and then with early Christian baptism—Paul's teaching, the rite in Acts, and the main features of New Testament doctrine. Mr. Marsh has made a welcome and much-needed contribution to a somewhat neglected field in a book which is creditable both to author and publishers.

F. J. RAE.

THE GERMAN CHARACTER.

The two most interesting things in this large and important book—*The German Mentality*, by Verrina (Allen & Unwin; 10s. 6d. net)—are, first, the assertion that the barbarism characteristic of Nazi-ism is not something to be separated from the real German people but is definitely a quality of the nation as a whole; and, second, that unless a cure for this disease is found there can be no permanent peace in Europe.

In the 'Spectator' of 28th March there is a quotation from the diary of Mr. Dodd, American Ambassador in Berlin, in which the Ambassador says that Nazi-ism contained a savagery and barbarism which disappeared from England in 1688, and attributes it largely to the failure of Bismarck to wean his Prussians away from the military brutalism hallowed by the successes of Frederick

the Great. But Verrina will not allow that it is Prussianism alone that has inherited this evil thing. He tells the story of the development of the German people, and contends that this shows the nation as indoctrinated by the same virus. To say that we are fighting not Germany or the German people but Hitlerism is, in his opinion, a grave mistake. If we are to bring peace to the world we must face the fact that what we are contending against is far more deep-seated than that. And certainly the picture he draws of the system is very black. Art, philosophy, education (the secondary school code begins with the statement that the aim of education is to produce the national socialist man), justice ('justice is what is useful for the State; the leader and the party have to decide what is useful for the State')—all these come under the iron heel of this brutal despotism.

But all this has been said and written before. The most engrossing part of Verrina's book is the section which contains his 'cure' for this evil thing. Only the heads of his prescription can be given. The mentality must be changed by education. Particularly the youth in which the trouble has become radical must be removed from Germany and brought under better influences—a kind of Borstal for German infected youth. Meantime, there must be security against the brutal disregard of treaties and promises. There must be total and final disarmament in Germany. There must be a new economic order which will remove many of the causes of distress and grievance. The working class organizations which were destroyed by Hitler and in which lay the hope of better things must be restored. And finally and most drastic of all, Germany should be broken up into the provinces or kingdoms out of which her artificial unity was created. This would defeat for good the menace of her ambition to the world. This prescription will obviously be a difficult one to put into practice. But at any rate it is put forward with a wealth of argument and historical knowledge. And Verrina is perhaps entitled to say to us: Have you anything more reasonable or more efficient to suggest? We might, perhaps, answer: 'The Christian gospel.' Or we might say: 'The establishment of a free system of free peoples which would show the German mind what freedom actually brings.' But these answers are outside the scope of Verrina's outlook.

F. J. RAE.

is an excellent book of its kind. It sets out to give in simple language a statement of the chief articles of the Christian faith, and the measure of success attained is very creditable to the writer. In a dozen chapters he covers in a brief but instructive and interesting way such topics as the Scriptures, God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Sin, the Church, the Christian Hope. In treating of the Scriptures the statement is made that 'when the Old Testament came to be read in the Synagogues, the scribes substituted the term "Word" for the name "Jehovah".' This might be taken for a misprint for 'Lord' except that the context makes plain that the mistake is not with the printer but with the author. The book as a whole presents the Faith in a reasonable, convincing, and inspiring way.

Sir Richard Acland, Bt., M.P., has written a book, *The Forward March* (Allen & Unwin; cloth 3s. 6d. net, paper 2s. 6d. net), in which he sketches the social order which he thinks should be established, and the prospect of which he believes would effectively counter the Nazi propaganda and inspire the free peoples of the world with enthusiasm. He writes as a Liberal, for Liberalism has always made the well-being of the individual citizen the final criterion, and he rejects the term Socialism because its appeal is too materialistic. But in reality his picture of the 'Service Community' is not easily distinguishable from Socialism. He calls for the nationalizing of the great industries, though he would leave room in his system for the small shopkeeper and artisan. His hope is that the individual workers, realizing that the national assets were their own property, would serve in their various trades and occupations with a new enthusiasm and an unselfish zeal for the common good. He pictures the workers, freed from all anxiety, happy in any position they may be called to occupy and content with whatever remuneration is allotted to them. He looks to the Church to help in maintaining this ideal of service.

It is easy, of course, for any writer to paint a glowing picture of the system he advocates while setting in darker colours the system he criticises. It is often forgotten that in any given system there is an organic unity so that its good points cannot readily be separated from its drawbacks. Any system of common ownership must carry with it the dangers of bureaucracy and the undue curtailment of individual liberty. It is futile to say that the community will decide its own policy and knows its own needs best. In practice decisions will lie with Government Departments and Govern-

A Theology for Christian Youth, by Dr. Henry David Gray (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press; \$1.00),

ment Officials whose doings are not easily controlled. And communities which have had experience of the quite unbelievable stupidity of Departments and Officials may be pardoned if they hesitate to deliver themselves over to such control. The question of what system will produce the maximum of human well-being is at least debatable.

That being so, Sir Richard Acland's criticism of the Church seems unfair. 'It is the duty of the Church to condemn the very foundation on which the present society rests. . . . The Church has failed because of timidity.' In face of so complicated and momentous a problem surely it is understandable that Christian men may differ in their views on principle and that their attitude may be due not to timidity but to conviction. Sir Richard's case is not so absolutely unanswerable as he imagines. At the same time his book is written with great clearness and is singularly thought-provoking.

Why Another World War?, by Mr. George Gilbert Armstrong (Allen & Unwin; 10s. 6d. net), is a searching investigation of the causes that led up to the present war. The writer pinned his faith to the League of Nations, and he sets out to show 'how we missed collective security.' He lays the blame primarily on certain British statesmen and supports his charge with ample quotations from their speeches and other documents. Any student of history, and particularly of the history of the last war, knows how extraordinarily difficult it is to get at the truth, and how easy it is to bring a mass of evidence in support of one view or another. One feels that this book is written in too partisan a spirit. The writer seems to have no feeling for those blind racial movements and mighty forces of fate against which the wit of statesmen struggles in vain. General Smuts has told us how, after a life of masterful striving, his eyes were opened at the Peace Conference. 'In Paris I saw my smallness against Fate. I saw there was a crack in life itself, which also went through me.' To imagine that any single statesman could mend that crack, or that any single change of policy could make the world whole again, is an idle dream. In such an hour of destiny as this we look for something higher than the recriminations of party politics.

Sir William Hamilton's dictum that one equation is universally true, 'Mathematical genius equals general blockhead,' was doubtless never meant for more than a quip at the expense of some profes-

sorial colleague. Be that as it may, in *Time and Time Again*, by Professor E. M. Rowell (Allen & Unwin; 7s. 6d. net), we have the work of a professional mathematician who is deeply versed in philosophy, and especially in poetry and art. He has collected more than a score of 'papers written from time to time over a span of years,' but they have a unity in that they show 'glimpses of the closely congressive nature of our world.' Not everybody is interested in the 'is-ness' of things or the significance of names and numbers, but a wide variety of subjects is touched upon, particularly in the realm of beauty and art. There is even a 'plea for the sentimentalist.' The book is full of ripe wisdom, keen discernment, and fine sensibility. A sentence or two from the Essay on Faith may give some taste of its quality. 'Faith is the power of things that are not to confound the things that are; it renders substantial that which is not, but might be; it makes clear that which eye hath not seen; and yet what might be can never free itself from what *is*, and the ineffable vision is seen as through a glass darkly. . . . Human scepticism confronts animal faith, and faith if it is to stand its ground against scepticism must enlarge its borders. Faith must go out into the highways and compel to come in the ugly, the evil, the negative of life; it must not only confront these things, it must accept them, draw them into its very self, include them in its very being.'

A very charming book on Pascal has been written by Mr. H. F. Stewart. He calls it *The Secret of Pascal* (Cambridge University Press; 5s. net). It is, he modestly says, a postscript to a former book, 'The Holiness of Pascal.' He has felt moved, 'before I disappear,' to submit his thoughts on other aspects of Pascal's genius, and these thoughts concern three of them—his skill in debate, his moral teaching, and his mastery of language. It is in the last of these his 'secret' is to be found. His secret is his style. He is the founder of French prose. But, though the writer is specially enthusiastic about Pascal's prose, he has a great deal to say on the other subjects mentioned, and it is all interesting and illuminating. He quotes largely, and generally in the original. But it is not difficult French, and should not present any obstacle to a fairly well-educated reader. The book is beautifully produced.

A book of great spiritual beauty with the title *Jesus and His Passion* has been written by Mr. Reginald Glanville and published by the Epworth

Press (3s. 6d. net). No one need look in it for a theory of the Atonement. Indeed, the Cross is not regarded here as an act of God so much as an achievement of Jesus Himself. Probably many people will miss in this book what they look for in any book on the Lord's Passion. And therefore it may be said that, if you are to enjoy this particular book and profit by it, you must put aside your theological views, however true and essential, and be content to travel with this writer from the Baptism of Jesus to Calvary. Even if you do not agree with him about many things, his devotion to the Lord, his evident sincerity, his insight, his spiritual sensitiveness will leave something precious in your mind. If one were to put the essence of this book into a few words, it would be something like this. Jesus at His baptism knew Himself to be the eternal Son of God. He endured the restrictions of His incarnate state because of His faith. He looked forward to the Resurrection to liberate Him for a wider and more fruitful ministry, in which He was to be both with His people (as a shepherd) and in them (as the Vine). The writer travels quietly and devoutly along this road, and it is good company the reader will enjoy all the way.

A book of worship 'for the use of youth fellowships entering the communion of Christ's Church' has been compiled by Mr. John H. Litten under the appropriate title *Within Thy Gates* (Epworth Press; 3s. net). The author has in mind both the potent possibilities in youth for the enrichment of Church fellowship and the equally potent possibilities in the Church fellowship for the enrichment of youth. The book also takes into account the social character of worship, and responsive services are one of its features. Briefly, there are five orders for morning service and five for evening. Each service is preceded by a page of 'Thoughts for Morning (or Evening) Worship.' Music is provided for responses and amens. The special prayers are brief. They are some of them well-known Collects, and others probably by the compiler. A fairly careful examination of the book leaves the impression that it is admirably adapted to its purpose. It provides forms of worship which are beautiful in themselves and not too exacting for the ordinary intelligence. It should be said that prayers for use on special occasions are provided as an appendix.

In *The New Christian Year* (Milford; 5s. net)

Mr. Charles Williams has gathered extracts from all sorts of writers, saints, poets, theologians, and preachers for each day of the Christian Year. There are not too many for any one day, and generally speaking the passages chosen are well worth pondering and remembering. Occasionally one wonders why a sentence which is not notably bright has been printed, even though it has a famous name attached to it. But these lapses are few. It would be a rewarding experience for any devout reader to use such a book as this regularly and submit himself to the piercing truths uttered by the saintly and the great. An index of names would have been a boon, for one often wishes to recall a saying already read and the words, though not the author, forgotten. This is a beautiful little book both in form and contents.

Personal Religion and the Future of Europe, by Mr. Douglas Stewart, M.A. (S.C.M.; 2s. 6d. net), is really a plea for a religious faith as the essential foundation of any decent life, individual, national, or international. Its text is 'where there is no vision the people cast off restraint.' The writer has in view the man who says: 'I'm a decent fellow but I never go to church.' And his comment is that when the individual man severs his connexion with the Church he condemns his nation or his civilization to moral impotence. Why does morality need religion? The book is a well-reasoned answer to that question.

We have within recent times witnessed the publication of large and important books on worship, of which Miss Underhill's is perhaps the best. A new work on the subject, entitled simply *Worship*, by Mr. J. O. Dobson (S.C.M.; 5s. net), is of a less ambitious kind, but it has its own distinctive merits. It is the fruit of sound historical scholarship, and it combines a sense of the greatness of the theme with a vein of common sense which never loses its sense of proportion. There is a good deal of interesting information about the history of worship, the place of art in worship is fully discussed; the relative importance of devotion and preaching in divine service is very well handled; and in short everything that has any claim to be treated under the general rubric receives attention. The book is comprehensive, interesting, and informative, and will help to clear the mind on several important problems.

The Emphasis in the Work of the Ministry.

BY THE REVEREND HORACE F. WALLACE, D.D., ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN MISSION, SWATOW.

A TWOFOLD explanation may be offered for this article. One whose lifework has been wholly concerned with the upbuilding and development of one of the younger churches of Christendom finds himself frequently compelled to reconsider the real value of much that is held in honour in the tradition of the older churches, as he finds that it cannot establish itself in the sphere of his own work. And further, one whom the circumstances of life have made of necessity a sympathetic outside observer of the home churches may be perhaps regarded with indulgence if he thinks that he may see some facts about them more clearly than those who are all the time busily occupied within them.

No one, who has had the opportunity of observing intimately the progress through many years of a younger church abroad, and has also been able on periodical returns home to note the tendencies that are apparent there, can fail to realize that the conditions of the Church's existence in the two spheres have been rapidly approximating to each other. On the one hand, the younger churches are no longer inappreciable specks in a social mass that is unaffected by their presence; they are being felt as active elements in it. And on the other hand, the churches at home are more and more finding themselves confronted by a mass of sentiment as unsympathetic, indifferent, critical, and even hostile, as is found in the non-Christian societies of what we used to call heathen lands. It is not really relevant that the number of professed Christians in China may be only one in four or five hundred, while in Great Britain it may be one in four or five. The forces arrayed against the Church may be immeasurably larger here than there; but they are fundamentally the same forces and act in the same fashion. The challenges to the Church and the tasks of the Church are the same here as there; it has to meet the same denials and the same unconcern, and is called to the same sort of witness. And it is the same weapons and the same strategy that will be successful there as here. The development of the younger churches has been hampered by the too ready assumption that traditional methods adapted to churches which were dominant in their environments might be simply transferred to churches which had all their place in their world still to make. It will be an

error of the same sort if the older churches, set now in societies in which they are by no means so clearly dominant as they were, refuse to accept guidance from younger churches which are so much more familiar than they are with the business of effective Christian witness in a wide unfriendly environment.

I limit the application of this observation here to one question, whether in the changed and changing conditions of these days it is not high time to reconsider radically that emphasis on preaching as the main work of the minister, which is traditional in most of the older Protestant churches, and conspicuously in those of the Presbyterian order. To great numbers of loyal church members, both within and without the Presbyterian order, this is, of course, stark heresy. The pulpit has been the Holy of holies in their tradition, just as the material pulpit occupies the central place in their church buildings. When they call a minister, the main question considered is whether he can preach effectively, and of this they must be assured in most cases by the hearing of their own ears. The theological colleges spend much time on the training of their students in the art of sermon-making and the technique of preaching; and from the press there comes a steady stream of books on preaching, and of others that provide in more or less prepared form material for the making of sermons. It is universally assumed that the main business of the minister is to prepare and preach sermons. He is expected to produce two interesting and effective sermons each Sunday, and perhaps a minor one for a week-night service. To this the rest of his work is regarded as secondary, if not subsidiary; and he is generally, and no doubt for the most part truly, supposed to spend the best part of three or four days of his week on this work, and to have his mind never far away from it during his reading and thinking at other times.

Now it is surely a very relevant question whether the results of this weekly output of sermons, and of all the honest work that goes into them, is in any reasonable proportion to the time and energy expended on them. Is the Church under the sway of this system making the best use of the gifts of her ministers to meet the needs of her own people and of those outside her bounds to whom she has also a duty of ministry? There are various disturbing

and humiliating questions which might be asked regarding it. In what proportion do the members of the average congregation show appreciation of this main work of their minister by coming to church to hear his sermon; more particularly, how many come to hear two in the day? How many need two satisfying spiritual messages—if they indeed are such—in one day, and how many can really assimilate two? To how many is the hearing a true joy and refreshment of spirit, and to how many a habit, or a discipline, or a weariness, or a mere blank? How many put their minds into the hearing in any proportion to the mental and spiritual energy that went to the making of the sermon? And, perhaps most important question of all, how many of those who are most vital to our churches, the younger people and the children, feel that this supreme function of the ministry is a satisfying ministry to their needs? I speak of the average sermon of the average preacher—and most ministers would admit, ruefully perhaps, that that is the class to which they belong. But would it be true to fact to affirm that congregations which have had for long periods the services of preachers of outstanding merit display to the world standards of Christian faith and living that rise far above the average which the preaching of the average minister can create? In view of the answers which must be given to such questions, is there not a strong case for saying that, to judge by results, the enormous weekly output of sermons is a conspicuous example of misdirected energy?

This, it may be said, is a question which ought not to be asked. 'Speak unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear.' The seed must be sown in any case, but only God can give the increase. And that would be a sufficient answer if there were no more hopeful way of sowing the seed, more likely to yield increase, more profitable to the Church, and more encouraging to the sower.

Professor C. H. Dodd in his book on *The Apostolic Preaching and its Developments* brings out the distinction drawn in the New Testament between 'preaching' (kerygma) and 'teaching' (didache or paraklesis). 'Preaching is the public presentation of Christianity to the non-Christian world. . . . Much of our preaching in church at the present day would not have been recognized by the early Christians as "kerygma." It is teaching or exhortation ("didache," "paraklesis"), or it is what they called "homilia," that is, the more or less informal discussion of various aspects of Christian life and thought, addressed to a congregation already established in the faith' (pp. 4, 5). No one who believes in

Christianity as a gospel would deny that preaching in this New Testament sense is a permanent and essential function of the Church everywhere and in all conditions. It ought indeed to be realized far more fully than it is, at least in practice, that this preaching should be as spontaneous an activity of the older established churches as it is universally recognized to be in those churches which are only a small minority set in the midst of a vast non-Christian society. Every smallest congregation of these churches recognizes it as a natural function of its very existence that it preach the gospel to those outside its borders; almost every congregation has its special organization for this purpose; and it is regarded as a usual thing that the Church member should bear his witness where and as he can to those whom he meets in the ordinary traffic of life. How far away our home churches have come to be from this state of things needs no demonstration. In how many of their congregations is the preaching of the gospel to the unbelieving outsider (a work which in these days to be effective has almost certainly to be done outside the church buildings) a leading activity? Or witnessing to the gospel, however wisely and tactfully, regarded as the natural business of the loyal churchman? Are our home churches not still living for the most part in a generation which has already passed away (if indeed it ever was), in which it could be assumed that every man and woman and child who had no vital connexion with the Church at least knew tolerably well what it is that the Church is appointed to proclaim; and have not yet adjusted themselves to the fact that they are becoming more and more islanded in societies which know little about it and care less? Of preaching in this sense our older churches need not less but greatly more. They have need to learn from the younger churches to put evangelism in the forefront of their programme, realizing, as they do, that it is the essential condition of their continued existence.

But that is patently not the purpose of the great mass of the preaching that is done in the churches. It cannot be, for the people to whom it would be addressed are not there to hear. They have to be sought elsewhere. Far the greater part of the sermons delivered to their congregations are deliberately designed to be, as Professor Dodd says, 'teaching,' or, in the older phrase, for the edification of the believer, to give him a better understanding of the implications of his faith and of the duties which it requires of him. And this opens up the vital question. If it be allowed that the main purpose of the sermon is 'teaching,' is pulpit preaching

an effective method of teaching? It belongs to the lecture method of teaching which used to be employed in some of our larger schools, but is, one hopes, now banished from them. It still prevails in universities, notably in the Scottish ones, but is by few regarded as approaching the ideal; it is increasingly exposed to severe criticism as at discord with sound educational principles, and only tolerable because nothing better can as yet be substituted for it. It requires the learner to be passively recipient; it rules out the close contact of teacher and taught, and that interchange of thought between them which is essential to all real education. But this is still the Church's chosen method of teaching. And in the lecture-room of the university it may at least be assumed that the student has a desire to assimilate the instruction given, if for no higher motive, at least because of examinations that loom ahead. But in the Church the desire cannot be assumed, and no such fear exists.

It surely does not need to be argued that the churches to-day have need of sound teaching as well as of vivid and forceful preaching (kerygma). Surrounded by an intensely critical (sometimes even hostile) environment, the members of our churches never had more need to be soundly grounded in their faith and to have a right understanding of what is involved in it; and this is true most of all of the younger members and adherents. The times are forcing it home on the churches that their teaching function is important as it never was before; yet they are content to go on fumbling with an obsolete method of teaching of which the ineffectiveness has been well proved. For is it not the disheartening experience of every minister to find that those who have been 'sitting under' his preaching for it may be a score of years or more have taken in so little of what he has been trying week by week to get over to them? Let us at least give up thinking that the preaching of sermons which are at best passively, and at worst inertly, listened to, can ever be an effective way of giving instruction in Christian truth. If the Church is a teaching institution, as all would admit, it is surely time for it to adjust its methods to that fact, and to equip itself and its ministry to fulfil effectively this most vital function?

The minister, in his efforts to teach by means of the sermon, suffers from a great disadvantage from which the university lecturer is free, in that his audience is not homogeneous, but rather as far from being so as it well could be. The old, the middle-aged, and the young, the aged and infirm and the child, and every variety of intelligence and educa-

tional standard, are included in his congregation; and an effective teaching of all equally by any form of sermon is frankly impossible. For effective teaching division into more homogeneous groups is necessary. This is already admitted in practice in the case of children and adolescents, but there is no logical reason why the method should be confined to these. Those in the twenties and thirties, the middle-aged, the elderly men and women, have their own outlook on life and their own problems. Should they not then have their own group meetings for instruction, and for the discussion of matters that more nearly concern them, where they can open up their minds to one another free from the fear of unsympathetic comment or criticism from those outside the borders of their group. For effective teaching in Christian faith and life the system of grouping should be extended through the whole body of the congregation, so that each member of it may, if he desires it, find a place where he can be more than a passive listener to exhortations which seem to have little relevance to himself, where he can express himself when and as he will, and by question and discussion elicit the teaching of which he particularly finds himself in need.

Of all these groups the minister would probably have to be the moving spirit, the guide, and in great part the teacher; and therefore he would have to be delivered to a great extent from the incubus of sermon-making. The emphasis in his work would be definitely shifted from preaching (in the modern, not in the New Testament sense) to teaching, as it can only be effectively done, by direct instruction, and discussion and interchange of thought. He would give his energies less to preaching sermons to the elderly and middle-aged, and much more to the teaching and inspiring of the young, with whom the future of the Church lies. Congregations would have to learn, and without doubt would soon learn, that, if teaching in the things that they desire and need to know were already otherwise provided, two formal services with sermons are not essential to maintain the spiritual vigour of a church. They would come to appreciate that a service of worship, well-ordered and devoutly led, can be a complete unity without any sermon in the traditional manner, and more impressive in reverence than if there were attached to it a sermon, perhaps of a very perfunctory character simply because a sermon there must be. The minister in his conduct of worship would be more free to make it simply and satisfyingly devotional, released from the necessity of combining in it exposition and instruction and exhortation; and to

lead his people to realize in the fellowship of the Spirit the unity that transcends all differences.

The shifting of the emphasis in the work of the minister from preaching to teaching would not make it less exacting, but more so ; but it would make it more systematic and also far more rewarding. There would be far less in it of futile beating of the air, and much closer contact with the practical problems and experiences of his people. For this form of work he would have to be trained, more thoroughly than he is now trained in the making and delivery of sermons. The emphasis in his training would be on training for teaching. But at least it is an easier business to train teachers than to train preachers. The great preacher is conspicuously born and not made. The prophet, as St. Paul recognized, is the greatest gift of the Spirit to the Church, but he is pre-eminently a gift. The great teacher too is without doubt born and not made ; but all experience goes to show that very competent teachers can be made out of ordinary material—else what are our teacher-training colleges for ?—while it hardly verifies that the same is true of preachers, who are such in the New Testament sense. If the great majority of ministers were definitely trained for the teaching work of the ministry the result would be much more satisfactory than that of endeavouring to train all as preachers, regardless of their original qualifications, especially in the confusion of purpose that exists when preaching is assumed to have teaching for its main object.

I have said that the older churches may in these days learn something from the younger. The tradition in my own church was early fixed on the good Presbyterian view that the preaching of sermons was the main work of the minister, that there must be two each Sunday, and that they must last for at least half an hour. The Chinese people are very tolerant of speechifying ; even school children regard it as the proper way of celebrating any special holiday to hold a meeting and invite several speakers to address them. But they are too apt to regard speeches as formal utterances of appropriate sentiments, which are not to be taken too seriously ; and church folk were only too ready to regard

sermons in the same way, especially a long sermon on a tropical summer afternoon. Now in practically all our churches there is only one sermon on Sunday—still too long as a rule—and the afternoon is used for group meetings, children and adults in classes according to their standards and requirements, young men and women in groups for teaching and discussion ; while all gather at the close for a short period of common worship before setting out on what for many is a long trek home. It is all very primitive, and far from efficient ; and because the congregations are gathered from wide areas the time available is limited to Sunday, and only a few hours of that day ; but it gives one a vision of what might be in churches far more highly developed, concentrated in small areas, composed of people vastly superior in education and mental initiative, and immeasurably better equipped with all material resources.

No one who is called to the ministry of the gospel can escape the necessity of fulfilling in himself, according to the gifts bestowed upon him, the true preaching function of the Church, the proclamation of the gospel to those who are outside it, whether they are outside the visible Church or not ; and nothing that has been said is meant to acquit him of this responsibility, or of the duty of bringing those whose thinking he guides to share it with him. But there are diversities of gifts among those called to the ministry of the one gospel. Those on whom the gift of preaching (in the New Testament sense) has been conspicuously bestowed should, without doubt, be set free to exercise it to the fullest, though it is more open to doubt whether they should have their ministry largely restricted to one congregation and one locality, or should not rather be set more free, as the prophets in the Apostolic Church were, to use their gift in the service of the whole Church wherever the need may be greatest. But the minister of more ordinary and less specific gifts will best fulfil his ministry by diligence in teaching his people, and nurturing a devout spirit of worship among them, while never allowing either himself or them to forget or neglect the Apostolic charge, to 'proclaim the wondrous deeds of Him who has called you from darkness to His wonderful light.'

The Religion of Robert Bridges.

BY THE REVEREND JAMES MACKAY, LONDON.

THE religion of Robert Bridges is expressed in his poetry, as every man's religion must be expressed in his work, and, therefore, it is to his poetry itself we must go, and not to any interpretation of it, if we would understand what religion meant to him. 'It is a fixed doctrine of mine,' wrote Henry Bradley to Bridges in one of the letters of their delightful *Correspondence*, published a few months ago, 'that a poet ought never to explain himself (indeed *cannot* explain his poetry—unless by other poetry—without doing himself an injustice).' What the poet cannot do for his own poetry it were surely an impertinence for another to essay, for a poem is 'an intimate echo of the poet's life,' and that echo cannot be truly caught save from the poem itself. A poem grows out of the poet's consciousness, or, rather, out of 'a psyche more complete than consciousness'¹ as mysteriously

As some perfected flower, Iris or Lily, is born
patterning heav'nly beauty.

No description of the flower can tell us what the flower itself can tell us, nor can any part of it convey the beauty and significance of the whole. So it is with a poem, and so it is especially with the poems of Robert Bridges. No poet in the English language ever sought with more scrupulous delicacy to select the right words and rhythms to express his experience of the beauty that is 'all with spirit twined,' and every poem of his, even down to its eccentric orthography, is so deeply imbued with his individuality that its message cannot come to us fully save in its own *form*. And if in this brief essay I must 'murder to dissect' I do so with the reverent hope that these fragments severed from the lovely forms may turn the eyes of any who may read them to the forms themselves. I shall use *The Testament of Beauty*² as our main source in this inquiry and use quotations from other poems where they will help to clarify.

We may, if we wish, begin with a definition of religion, for we have one, very carefully

¹ C. J. Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, 49.

² All quotations in this essay are from *The Testament* unless another source is indicated.

worked out for us, in the fourth book of the *Testament*:

joyful obedience

with reverence to'ard the omnificent Creator
and First Cause, whose Being is thatt beauty and
wisdom
which is to be apprehended only and only approach'd
by right understanding of his creation, and found
in that habit of faith which some thinkers hav
styled
The Life of Reason; and this only true bond of love
and reasonable relation (if relation ther be)
'twixt creature and creator, man and nature's God,
the which we call *Religion*—is fundamental,
physically and metaphysically in fashion
or force undistinguishable from Duty itself.

That passage contains a very lofty conception of religion, yet we should miss much if we were to accept it as a complete summary of the religion of Robert Bridges and the *terminus ad quem* of our inquiry, for the whole of his poetry flashes with the ever-changing shades of his religious experience,

delicat as the shifting hues
that sanctify the silent dawn with wonder gleams.

And, notwithstanding even his amazing fertility of expression and the exquisite care with which he selected words and patterns, he has to confess at the end that his experience has beaten him, that it has been too rich in content for expression. He has been 'telling of things that cannot be told,' for religion really is 'a direct contact with eternities,' an experience of limitless enchantment and wonder which cannot be expressed in any words however carefully chosen and musically ordered,

For not the Muse herself can tell of Goddes love.

The Testament of Beauty is not an easy book. Although it is a philosophical poem, it has none of the ordered sequence of a philosophical treatise. It is like a landscape seen from a circling airplane rather than even the vision of one

who rambling wide hath turn'd, resting on some
hill-top
to view the plain he hath left, and see'th it now
out-spredd
mapp'd at his feet,

for beauty flashes upon us from so many angles in quick succession that we are almost bewildered by it. Sudden interpolations of great loveliness break into the poem with the seeming irrelevance of a Euripidean chorus. But there is no real irrelevance. The whole poem is the exuberant expression of an exceptionally rich mind, only its order is determined by emotional and spiritual rather than logical considerations.

Yet its central message is clear enough :

How Natur . . . teacheth man by beauty,
and by the lure of sense leadeth him ever upward
to heav'nly things, and how the sensible forms
which first arrest him take-on ever more and more
spiritual aspect,

until at last that which emanated from God in the lowliness of 'the first-born atoms' completes the Ring of Existence by rising into 'spiritual conscience' and

the spirit of man
escaping from the bondage of physical law
re-entereth eternity by the vision of God.

Bridges has none of the doubts about the purpose of creation that so often vex philosophers and scientists. The former may be unable to discern any single aim expressed in the Universe and the latter, as they contemplate stars more in number than the sand-grains on all the sea-shores in the world, may cry, For what purpose is this waste ? but the poet is sure that it is all the Grace of God active in creation and redemption. He sees life rising from its dark unknown source into the transfiguring Beauty like a fountain rising into rainbows in the sunshine. Only an intimate knowledge of the poem can give us the full depth and richness of his conception of Beauty and its place in creation. It is the very being of God, the 'Eternal Spouse' of His Wisdom, the 'Angel of his Presence thru' all creation,'

the highest of all these occult influences,
the quality of appearances that thru' the sense
wakeneth spiritual emotion in the mind of man.

We are reminded of Shelley's conception in *Adonais* :

the one Spirit's plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling
there,
All new successions to the forms they wear ;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness.

But there is more in Bridges than in Shelley. Beauty is the very living womb in which all things

are growing. We all live in God, and He ever seeks to make us lovely with His own loveliness. No human words can describe the exquisite gentleness of the touches of God's Beauty on the soul, but none can escape its mystic influence.

Delicat and subtle are the dealings of nature,
whereby the emotionable sense secretly is touch'd
to awareness and by glimpse of heav'nly vision
drawn
within the attraction of the creativ energy
that is the ultimat life of all being soe'er.

Beauty is not projected on the Universe by Reason. 'The idea of Beauty is not reason's idea.' It influences the soul in its 'wondering dawn' before reason is awake. It is like the sunshine that makes the sap mount secretly in the wintry stalk. Even before Infant Desire has begun to see any meaning or goal in life the breath of Beauty is quickening the budding personality. The child is made for Beauty. Its soul needs beauty as its body needs mammal's milk, and no surrogate can take its place. The natural propensity of the child is toward beauty. The embers of the eternal flame are in the soul waiting for the kindling breath.

See then the boy in his first encounter with beauty,
his nativ wonder awaken'd by the motion of love ;
as when live air, breathing upon a smothered fire,
shooteth the smouldering core with tiny flames—
so he
kindleth at heart with eternal expectancies,
and the dream within him looketh out at his eyes.
'Twas thru' worship of Christ that this thing came
to men.

Thus Rafaël once venturing to show God in Man
gave a child's eyes of wonder to the Baby Christ.

Since Beauty is the very being of God, it follows that it is one and indivisible. What we call sensuous beauty is not to be separated from what we call spiritual beauty. Indeed,

sensuous Beauty
is herself mother
of heav'nly Love (so far as in human aspect
eternal essence can hav mortal parentage).

So, in the mysterious age-long weaving of the web of life, under the compelling influence of evolving Beauty the crude aggressive instincts of human nature—Self, Sex and Blind Impulse—have been lifted

From blind animal passion to the vision of Spirit.
Selfhood, from brutish beginnings, rises in Mother-

hood at its best 'to reach communion with life eternal.' Sex, in the love of a Dante,

from like degrading brutality at heart
distilleth in the altruism of spiritual love
to be the sublimest passion of humanity,

and Dante's *Divina Commedia*, inspired by the same instinct that often leads to the mire,

lieth now
with all its earthly tangle by the throne of God.

So Blind Impulse or Necessity, under the influence of Beauty, becomes Duty, which is really

NECESSITY become conscient in man—where'to
all insubordination is imperfection in kind.

Though Beauty comes to us through the lowly channels of the senses in the form of mere vibrations of ether or air, these vibrations are the very vibrations of God and take on strange spiritual significance in the mind.

Visibles
are changed to invisible; and fine-measured motion
to immeasurable emotion.

The whole universe is drenched with the presence of God. So

the ravishing music that the small birdes make
in garden or woodland, rapturously heralding
the break of day . . .

stirreth so thy heart, making thee dream of things
illimitable unsearchable and of heavenly import.

So, also,

'mid the high mountain stillnesses, where Poesy
lieth in dream and with the secret strength of things
that governs thought inhabiteth . . . man wandereth
into God's presence.

Man is so made (he is the only creature so made) that he can respond to Nature with all his being, from 'the sky's unresting cloudland' to the music of Bach, and he is always being surprised by its beauty and sublimity into ecstasy, awe and worship. Man's *numinous* sense is so easily stirred that

it seemeth as though the eye
had some spiritual vision—as if the idea of Space
and also of God existed in the midnight skies;
and thus men . . .

stirred by influences that outreaching Reason
kindled unknown desires, their awed souls fell to
prayer
that the great Maker would reveal his Being.

So to Lucretius seeking Order in Chance
some frenzy of Beauty came, neath which constraint
he left
his atoms in the lurch and fell to worshipping.

Religion seems to be a natural instinct of man. And it enfires the whole personality. Aristotle's 'pensiv Deity' who can only be approached by reason purified from all emotion is not a conception that fits real religion as it exists among men.

I see the emotion of saints, lovers and poets all
to be the kindling of some Personality
by an eternizing passion; and that God's worshipper
looking on any beauty falleth straightway in love;
and thatt love is a fire in those devouring flames
all earthly ills are consumed, and at least flash of it,
be it only a faint radiancy, the freed soul glimpseth,
nay ev'n may think to have felt, some initiat foretaste
of thatt mystic rapture, the consummation of which
is the absorption of Selfhood in the Being of God.

Here we come quite naturally to the poet's own experience. For his poem is not just speculation about religion. It is 'an intimat echo' of his own life. 'The majority of men, almost, learn of God from visions,' says Tertullian, and Robert Bridges belongs to the majority. *The Testament of Beauty* begins with a profound mystical experience. In his old age, he tells us, 'when the path was narrowing and the company few' the world and life were suddenly transfigured for him, 'so by beauty estranged,' that he felt as if he had been born anew.

And yet was nothing new to me, only all was vivid
and significant that had been dormant or dead . . .
I felt the domination of Nature's secret urge
and happy escape therein.

He felt that oneness with the whole creation, that sense of a penetrating and enfolding peace and joy, which is the very heart of all mystical experience; and, like all mystics, he emphasizes the givenness of it. But that was not the first time he had felt the mystic rapture. The Spirit

that, in stillness of sound speaking to gentle souls,
dowereth all silence with the joy of his presence

had poured the same holy enchantment on his spirit many times. In one of his earlier poems, beginning, *Joy, sweetest lifeborn joy*, he suggests that in face of the monotony and frustration of life the spirit of man would give up the struggle after Beauty and call for death to come and end the pain and grief were it not for the surprisal and renewal of mystic moments of vision.

Then comes the happy moment: not a stir
In any tree, no portent in the sky:
The morn doth neither hasten nor defer,
The morrow hath no name to call it by,
*But life and joy are one,—we know not why,—*¹
As though our very blood long breathless lain
Had tasted of the breath of God again.

¹ Italics mine.

And having tasted it I speak of it,¹
 And praise him thinking how I trembled then
 When his touch strengthened me, as now I sit
 In wonder, reaching out beyond my ken,
 Reaching to turn the day back, and my pen
 Urging to tell a tale which told would seem
 The witless fantasy of them that dream.

But O most blessed truth, for truth thou art,
 Abide thou with me till my life shall end.
Divinity hath surely touched my heart ;
I have possessed more joy than earth can lend :
I may attain what time shall never spend.¹
 Only let not my duller days destroy
 The memory of thy witness and my joy.

The poet's debt to Christianity and especially to our Lord is apparent throughout his work. There is no doubt about the pre-eminence of Jesus. 'His kingdom is God's kingdom.' He is the great revealer and interpreter, and it is through Him that men come to God. God is far above our understanding and in His limitless beauty far removed from our stained imperfection, yet that disparity does not prevent man from having fellowship with Him, for

From this dilemma of pagan thought, this poison of faith,
 Mansoul made glad escape in the worship of Christ ;
 for his humanity is God's Personality,
 and communion with him is the life of the soul.

Men have tried to rationalize this living spiritual reality, to harden it into theological or ecclesiastical systems through which alone salvation might be found,

but the Wind of heav'n
 bloweth where it listeth, and Christ yet walketh
 the earth,
 and talketh still as with those two disciples once
 on the road to Emmaus.

Yet we cannot keep rising in the Ring of Existence towards the vision of God without faith and prayer. Faith is the great enheartener, 'the medicine of care, the clue of reality, and the driving motif of that self-knowledge which teacheth the ethic of life.' And though Prayer, 'the heaven-breathing foliage of faith' has never found a place

¹ Italics mine.

in any system of ethics, it is the great strength and stay of men, and be they 'credulous or sceptic' they turn to it instinctively in moments of strain. Prayer is neglected because it demands discipline and toil, but without it we cannot know our full power and happiness. I do not know any passage on prayer in English finer than the following :

Ah ! tho' it be a simple thing in reach of all,
 Best ever is rare, a toilsome guerdon ; and prayer
 is like
 those bodily exercises that athletes wil use,
 which each must humbly learn, and ere he win to
 power
 so diligently practice, and in such strict course
 as wil encroach unkindly on the agreements of life :
 whence men slouch in the laxity that they call ease,
 rather than rouse to acquiring thatt strength,
 without which
 the body cannot know the pleasur of its full ease,
 the leisure of strength in the hard labour of life.

He goes on to deal with the posture of prayer and the language of prayer. He feels that the greatest thing men ever do together is to worship, and that

ther is never dignity in a concourse of men
 save only as some spiritual gleam hearteneth the
 herd.

'Our happiest earthly comradeships hold a fore-taste of the feast of salvation,' but participation in eternal life is conditional.

The mind perisheth with this body, unless
 the personal co-ordination of its ideas
 hav won to Being higher than animal life,
 at thatt point where the Ring cometh upward to
 reach
 the original creativ Energy which is God,
 with conscience entering into life everlasting.

Perhaps that passage will help to counter the criticism sometimes made that Bridges' ignored the fact of evil and had a shallow doctrine of sin. Evil and sin are there, but the Divine Beauty and Love will triumph in the end,

for surely as mind in man groweth
 so with his manhood groweth his idea of God,
 wider and ever worthier, untill it may contain
 and reconcile in reason all wisdom passion and love,
 and bring at last (may God so grant) Christ's Peace
 on Earth.

In the Study.

Virginitibus Puerisque.

The Detector.

BY THE REVEREND S. GREER, M.A., AYR.

'Having the eyes of your heart enlightened.'—
Eph 1¹⁸ (R.V.).

IN the Royal Navy they have a new instrument for detecting the presence of U-boats. One morning a small naval ship went out to practise with it, accompanied by one of our own submarines. It was to be a try-out of the detector—a game of hide-and-seek—so off went the submarine and submerged. If, after two hours it was not 'spied,' it was to send up a column of smoke. The small naval vessel began to cruise about. Then the detector registered, which meant that there was a submarine close beneath them. How they would crow over the others, they thought, as they settled down above her. Shortly afterwards a column of smoke went up about a mile off. The men on deck gasped. Their submarine a mile away! Then what was this vessel they were sitting upon? As they found there was only one British submarine in the neighbourhood, the one below must be an enemy. It was a U-boat waiting to follow them into harbour, but a depth-charge prevented that.

Other things besides U-boats have a way of slinking in under false pretences. Sometimes Giant Evil disguises himself as a very agreeable fellow. He knows that if he looked ugly it wouldn't be hard to send him about his business. But one day as you are wrestling with that problem—in algebra perhaps—the thought glides into your mind, 'Why bother about it? The other boys and girls are out playing. Why should you swot and worry? What does it matter anyway?' You're feeling bored and tired. What a friendly-looking thing a crib is, or the answer to the problem which somebody else has got—'Why worry? Take things easy! Have a good time.'

Beware the swastika! Danger is lurking around. Hit hard at the thing which will strike you if you don't hit first. Where is that good time going to take you? It is only doing hard things that puts muscles into your character, and makes you strong. Having a good time looks attractive and jolly, but if you have 'the eyes of your heart enlightened,' you will see that it is just another name for Laziness, and Laziness, however pleasant, will, if you let it, scuttle all your best hopes.

Or the Giant may try another disguise. Sometimes a little fellow knows quite well what is the right thing. But it is pretty hard to take your own line, if it is an unpopular line. You hate to feel odd. Above all, you'd loathe to be a prig. Then comes the quiet suggestion: 'Be a good fellow and join in with the others. Give your conscience a rest. You'll never be popular if you're such a stickler for principle.'

But that's not being a good fellow. That's being a coward. If we are going to live on decent terms with ourselves we have got to keep our self-respect, and we can't do that unless we are true to ourselves. Many a young fellow has denied his Lord, as Peter did, in an attempt to be on the popular side. Then, when his eyes were open, he despised himself and hated the thing he had done.

Perhaps some one of you may be taken in in another fashion. He used to be the straightest of little fellows. When he said a thing you knew it was so. Maybe he is getting rather slack in that respect. Not always on the dead level. He has got it into his head that it is rather clever to get the better of other folk. Apart from telling a downright lie, which would make him feel rather uncomfortable, he does not scruple to deceive the home-folk about his school work, making them believe he is working hard when he is really shirking it. But there's all the difference in the world between the thing that is dead straight, and something that is ever so little crooked.

So we all need a Detector that will also help us to distinguish friend and foe, however well the enemy be camouflaged. And we may have it. St. Paul tells us that the eyes of our heart may be enlightened by knowing and loving Christ. If we follow Him we shall become sensitive to the presence of evil, and be able to penetrate its disguise, even when it promises us something good. Don't you think that would be a marvellous safeguard?

Blotting-paper.

BY THE REVEREND R. B. HANNEN, M.A.,
KIRKINTILLOCH.

'Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.'—
Eph 5¹⁶.

A great many things that are in common use never receive the recognition they deserve, simply because they are common. We handle and use

everyday things like spoons and pens and paper, and never give them a second thought. Yet there was a time when these things did not exist, and when they were invented men welcomed them as fine additions to the comfort and efficiency of their lives. When first introduced, people took notice of them and thought them wonderful. Nowadays we take them for granted, and never think of wondering at their presence. I thought the other day, for example, about the blotting-paper that was lying on my desk. There it was in use day after day and it had never caused me any surprise.

Do you not think that blotting-paper has been given a very strange name? Just the opposite of what it should be called, for blotting-paper is not paper for making blots on paper, but for preventing blots. I don't use it to make my writing blurred and indistinct. Too often I manage to do that without any help! I use the blotter to keep my writing neat and tidy, and to prevent me from wasting time by waiting till the ink from my pen has dried. Will you think with me for a moment then about this good friend of our copy-books and letters?

I am told that the first man who made blotting-paper was almost dismissed from his employment. His employer thought that he had ruined a large quantity of paper. For, you see, blotting-paper is just paper without what is called size, a substance that is mixed with paper pulp to make it hard, and give it a surface. This workman one day had forgotten to put the size into the mixture, and the paper that was produced could not be sold as writing-paper. By some lucky chance, however, for the workman, this absorbent paper put an idea into the paper manufacturer's head, and he discovered that what he thought was a useless batch of paper was really a most important discovery. People when they were writing shook sand over the ink to dry it up. But that was a cumbersome and often an untidy process. I am sure you would regard it as most inconvenient if you had to use it at school. It might be good fun—indeed I am certain it would—but it was a nuisance if you were in a hurry. Why should I not try to sell absorbent paper for this purpose? thought the paper manufacturer. And he did, and gave blotting-paper to the world. Now the world could hardly do without it, and I am sure you are only too glad to have it when you are hurrying to finish your homework, before going out to play. Blotting-paper is a great time-saver. It lets us do more in an hour than we would be able otherwise to do.

In my text that is just the idea in the mind of St. Paul. When he says, 'Redeem the time,' he is

just saying 'Buy it up,' don't waste it, but learn to do as much as possible for Jesus Christ in the time you have. Use every device for putting more love, more kind actions, more prayer into every hour of the day. St. Paul asks us to make use of everything that helps our minutes and days to be loaded with goodness and service. Blotting-paper tells us not to waste our time waiting for the ink to dry, and St. Paul tells us not to waste time waiting for some one else to do what we could be doing for Jesus Christ. Days are short, life itself is short, and there is so much to be done. God expects and encourages us to do as much as possible, and it is possible to do much if we are willing to learn the lesson of the blotting-paper.

The Christian Year.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

The Two Mysteries.

By THE REVEREND RODERICK BETHUNE, M.A.,
ABERDEEN.

'The mystery of iniquity.'—2 Th 2⁷.

'Great is the mystery of godliness.'—1 Ti 3.¹⁶.

It may be platitudinous, but it is true, and, since true, cannot be too frequently admitted that life has its problems for all of us. Some of these are purely personal and individual with which we must do battle by ourselves. Others, however, are of a different character. They are common to all men who think deeply and seriously of life and of the conditions in which we are called to live it.

It may be a consolation to some of us to hear such a convinced Christian as Paul use the word 'mystery' in connexion with certain aspects of life, even though it must be borne in mind that that word had not the connotation for him it has for the majority of us. He, too, apparently, had discovered that life was not quite so simple as he had once supposed. There were questions which, for all his faith, he found difficult to answer.

Careful consideration of his two statements, however, ought to provide us with more than consolation. It ought to provide us with courage. For this fact becomes clear, that, since Paul recognized not simply one mystery, as so many of us do, but two mysteries, 'the mystery of iniquity' and 'the mystery of godliness,' he faced life not dejectedly but hopefully.

Suppose, therefore, we think of these two mysteries and of the importance of remembering that there *are* two mysteries.

1. Upon the problem of iniquity it is possible, indeed highly probable, that almost all of us have brooded, as Paul did, long and deeply.

The mystery of iniquity confronted Paul within the compass of his own life in which, he gives us to understand, a conflict between good and evil was constantly being waged. 'O wretched man that I am!' he said on one occasion, 'who shall deliver me from the body of this death. And, on another occasion, 'For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.' Where *Paul* first confronted the mystery of iniquity is where we all make our first contact with it—within the compass of our own lives. Time and again, though we know what is right, we proceed to do what is wrong—why, we are often at a loss to tell. 'I have had more trouble with myself,' said a very famous man, 'than with any other man I have met.' A statement, surely, which many of us could make.

Though our first contact with the mystery is within our own lives, however, that, as we all know, does not by any means exhaust the mystery. Evil, such as a short time ago we could scarce imagine, has been performed. Men of like passions with ourselves seem possessed by some power which uses them for its own destructive purposes. Folk who desired nothing more than to be left in peace to enjoy their simple pleasures have been harried, dispossessed, and driven to seek safety and asylum in strange lands. The things thinking men have valued and cherished have been under assault and in some places bear the scars of battle. It is all very mysterious. Why such things should take place, why men like ourselves should derive satisfaction from actions which violate all canons of decency, why the way of the wicked should so often prosper, we cannot understand.

To say that some of us have brooded upon this 'mystery of iniquity' in recent days is but to state the sober truth. We have brooded so long and so deeply in many cases that we have found it difficult to have the trust in God we once had; and some of us, as a result of our brooding, have reached conclusions about men which bid fair to despoil us of any hope for the future of the world. Burdened and perplexed, many of us, it has got to be admitted, are facing life dejectedly.

Far be it from me to minimize the mystery of iniquity or to suggest that its effect upon our faith is not understandable. To do so would be to fly in the face of facts and to forget that what troubles so many of us troubled Jesus likewise—the obtuseness, the obstinacy, the callousness of men. The mystery of iniquity, let us frankly admit, has always been

very real, and it is as real to-day as ever it has been. But, and this is the point which needs emphasizing, many of us, as Paul's utterances remind us, have concentrated upon the mystery of evil as though there were only the *one* mystery in the world. What encouraged the great disciple was this fact, which all the evil in the world could not obscure, that there was *another* mystery, the mystery of godliness, another Power at work in the world besides the power of evil, the Power of goodness. Somehow, as he confronted himself with that fact, Paul was delivered from the awful dejection to which contemplation of the mystery of iniquity by itself leads.

Is what delivered him from his dejection capable of delivering us from ours? Suppose we think of this other mystery.

2. If we are to be perfectly honest, we must admit that we have never given the time to a consideration of godliness that we have given to a consideration of evil. Somehow, account for it how we may, godliness has never been a mystery to many of us in the sense in which evil has been a mystery. If a man succeeds in preserving his integrity and in keeping the respect of his colleagues through a lengthy business career, we, while we pay our tribute of praise to him, seldom stay to inquire what made his accomplishment possible or why *he* should have triumphed over temptations to which *others* have succumbed. And the attitude which has characterized many of us has characterized others also. For one story of a home in which peace and love and happiness have reigned, how many stories are published of homes wrecked by hate and selfishness? How often have the lives of good men captured the headlines of the Press? Anything like so often as the lives of the world's rogues?

Paul, let it be said, did not make our mistake. He recognized the power of evil and contemplated sorrowfully the lives over which it held sway. But he recognized another Power which held sway over vastly more lives than some people imagined. The godly men and women with whom he came in contact, the folk who through the years had been held in esteem, who had triumphed where others had fallen, all provided evidence of a Power outside the human resources whose limits Paul well knew which worked as mysteriously as the power of evil. And that Power whose workings he was quick to recognize in others he was as quick to recognize in himself. 'O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death,' he said. Yes, but he also said, 'I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' To him it was an endless source of comfort and courage that, if sin abounded in the

world, grace did much more abound. There was, he admitted, a mystery of iniquity. Yes, but he assured himself and others that there was also a mystery of godliness.

Is not the fact of which Paul reminded himself one which *we* must keep in remembrance if we are to have a fair and properly balanced view of life? Haven't many of us been so occupied with the men who are under the thralldom of evil we have omitted to consider those, and they are not a few, whose works are not of the darkness but of the light? Have we not attributed the resolve of such to preserve truth and beauty and righteousness just to what we are pleased to call *man's* sense of right? Is it not possible that God, of whose inactivity many of us have often complained, has been, even in the matter of matching such men with such an hour, much more active than we had supposed? Is there nothing of mystery attaching to men's decision to sacrifice themselves that others and the things they have cherished may be preserved?

If we who have been obsessed by the mystery of iniquity could begin to see what Paul saw, what a difference would be manifest in our attitude to life! And what should prevent us from seeing what he saw? The facts which he could not deny confront us as in his day they confronted him. If some in our time are under the dominion of evil, others, it is plain, are under the sway of goodness. If there is a mystery of iniquity to-day, isn't there also a mystery of godliness?

3. But it is worth noting, in the last place, that Paul would have us face life hopefully, as he himself faced it, not simply because there is opposed to the power of evil a Power of goodness. After all, the fact that there is a Power of goodness opposing the power of evil may only suggest to some of us that the conflict which has been waged through the generations is to continue through all future generations, the victory going sometimes to one side and sometimes to the other, and the prospect of a conflict without a definite issue we don't find altogether heartening. It is necessary, therefore, that we bear in mind Paul's further ground for confidence. 'This word "mystery," which he uses, is always used in the New Testament for what has been hidden, but is subsequently revealed.' And it is important that we remember that. Evil, Paul meant to indicate, might be rampant, its victories unquestionable, but some day its power would be overthrown. The hope of that ultimate victory, the belief that his steadfastness and loyalty in the evil day contributed something to that ultimate victory, gave Paul heart in a struggle which presented many

difficulties, disappointments, and setbacks. God, he was confident, so far from being indifferent or inactive, would some day set His seal upon his and upon his colleagues' labours.

From first to last this is the hope which the Scriptures convey. 'The light,' says John, speaking of Jesus and His Ministry, 'shone in the darkness, but the darkness did not master it.' And because Jesus, though He suffered for righteousness' sake as none has ever suffered, was finally victorious, there is, says the whole New Testament, every reason for believing that the ultimate triumph will lie, not with darkness, but with the light.

What a difference there would be in our attitude to our present struggles could we keep that hope which the Scriptures inspire constantly in mind. Our *efforts*, so far from appearing futile, as sometimes they do when we are without hope of ultimate victory, would be seen to be contributing to the final victory. Our *faith* in the reasonableness of the universe and in the activity of God would be deepened and confirmed. We should *face our difficulties*, disappointments, and setbacks as Paul faced his, with courage and in good heart.

On one occasion, writing to some friends who, like ourselves, were wont to lose heart, Paul exhorted them to be 'steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know,' he said, 'that your labour is not in vain in him.' It is, I believe, his message to us to-day. There are, he reminds us, two mysteries, and not just one as so many of us have supposed. And the final victory, he assures us, is not with evil but with godliness.

SUNDAY AFTER ASCENSION.

What about Prayer?

'And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, . . . one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray.'—Lk 11¹.

What about prayer? What do we mean by prayer? Is it necessary to true religion? Does it do any good? How are we to pray so as to gain full benefit from it?

Religion and Prayer. What is their relation?

In order to be free from the suspicion of narrowness and professionalism, listen to an exposition of this matter from the pen of a French philosopher rather than from any theological source. 'Religion,' says Auguste Sabatier, 'is an intercourse, a conscious and voluntary relationship, entered into by a soul in distress, with the mysterious Power upon which it feels itself to depend, and upon

whom its fate is contingent. This intercourse is realized by prayer. Prayer is religion in act—that is, prayer is real religion.' Any form of co-called religion, therefore, which makes no room for prayer is not properly a religion. 'If it cuts off man from prayer, it thus destroys itself. It leaves the soul and God a mutual remoteness, with no intimate commerce, no interior dialogue, no interchange, no action of God in man, no return of man to God.'

To make this still more clear, let us quote from the book of that well-known writer, Mr. H. G. Wells—a kind of 'Saul among the prophets.' In his remarkable book, *God the Invisible King*, he deals with the question how far we can speak of God as love. 'Loves,' he says, 'are the windows by which we may look out of the prison of self, but God is the open door by which we freely go, and God never dies, nor disappoints, nor betrays. That is man's love of God. But there is also something else: there is the love God bears for man in the individual believer. Now this is not an indulgent instructive, and sacrificing love such as a woman has for her baby, it is the love of a captain for his men. God must love His followers as a great captain loves his men, who are so foolish and helpless in themselves, so confiding, and yet whose faith alone makes him possible. It is an austere love.'

'And God waits for us, for all of us who have the quality to reach Him. He has need of us as we of Him. He desires us, and desires to make Himself known to us. He has won us from His enemy. We come staggering into the golden light of His kingdom to fight for His kingdom henceforth, until at last we are altogether taken up into His being.'

So much, then, for what is implied in religion and in prayer. Why, then, has the subject and the act of prayer become surrounded with so many difficulties?

The answer is not far to seek. There are two, and only two, fundamentally diverse views of the government of the universe, and they may be called—speaking broadly—the religious view and the scientific view. The religious view of the universe is that it was first created, and is now governed and controlled, by a Personal Being, or God, who has full authority and sway over all things. The physical world, that is stretched out in space, and the world of events that is stretched out in time, are held to be at God's disposal, so that His will is supreme and He can do as He thinks fit with all things. And the same is true of all living persons, except when they freely oppose His will. The religious view of the world holds, however,

that even when men do oppose Him, He can yet use them, as He uses all things. And if all men submit to Him, and join Him in fulfilling His purposes, then His will would be done, and His kingdom would come on earth as in heaven.

Over against this view of the world—the view of God's free, personal, effective control over everything—stands the scientific view, according to which the universe is 'ruled' by a set of impersonal, fixed, unalterable laws, the same always and everywhere, and which cannot and will not be broken through by any spiritual agency. Whatever is, is; whatever happens, must happen; you cannot change anything, nor alter the course of Nature for yourself, nor will God do it for you when you ask Him, for everything is locked in iron bonds of cause and effect. The bullet will find its billet whatever you do. This view of Nature ignores or denies the personality of God. There is then no place for religion; and prayer is fruitless in any effective sense.

Now it may sound strange at first, but we believe both these views of the universe to be true; that it is a personally guided and controlled universe, giving ample room and invitation to fruitful prayer, and yet that it is a machine. In other words, it is possible to hold the religious view of the universe in its simplest sense, and the scientific view in its most rigorous sense, though they seem to exclude each other, and to hold them both in the fullest way.

Let us take a simple illustration. We will imagine that a man is driving a motor-car. This is one of the most perfect and delicate of the many machines made by man. You can only drive your car by the strictest obedience to the physical laws in accordance with which the machine was made, and by means of the motive power, rightly directed, supplied by the petrol. The scientific view of a motor-car is the only practical view.

The universe is a machine driven by an invisible personal driver or guide, who has made the machine, the road, and the passenger. Prayer is the passenger's request to be taken safely through life to his journey's end; faith is the act of entering the car, and trusting our driver with our life and its direction; and the answer to the prayer of faith is that the whole universe-machine is God-directed to its destined end. The life of prayer, of religion, is simply a life in which we put ourselves in God's hands, asking to be taken safely through this life into the next, and trusting Him to do so wisely and lovingly, not by interfering with, but by using the laws of Nature which he has ordained for this

end. Nature is made for the sake of God's children, and if we pray to Him aright, He will help us to use it for our best interests, and He will lead us 'by a way' possibly 'that we know not,' yet quite safely and surely to our goal.

It is just here, however, that we come to the real problem of prayer. If the human will were always concordant with the Divine, there would be but one thing to pray for—that God's will might be clearly revealed to us, and that strength might be given us to fulfil it worthily. But our wills are our own, and our tendency is to seek to bring the Divine will into accord with them, instead of seeking God's will as the one guiding principle of life.

What, then, may we rightly pray for? Only for spiritual blessings? There is nothing we may not pray for if our spirit is right with God, and we can pray for nothing if it is not. He can give us anything He wills; He is not limited by 'Nature,' for He made it, and He made it for us; and as He has the power, so He can guide and control all natural processes if He sees fit to do so. Whether He will alter these things by His guidance or not at our request depends, not on His power but on His wisdom and on His knowledge of our needs. 'If it be thy will,' must, therefore, be the unspoken condition of all our prayers for this or that physical blessing or desire.

But asking for things is not the only or chief function of prayer. It is good 'to make known our requests before God,' but it is better simply to seek to come into fellowship with Him as friend with friend. It is not the chief function of friendship to ask for this or that, but to interchange our thoughts, to share in our feelings and sympathies. Prayer is giving ourselves in all our littleness and need, that the mighty power of God may flow into us in streams of love and grace, so that we may become the men and women we ought to be—strong to bear, daring to venture, swift to obey, ready amid uncertainty, calm amid danger, 'and filled,' as the Apostle says, 'with all the fulness of God.'¹

WHITSUNDAY.

The Conditions of Power.

BY THE REVEREND E. G. MANBY, B.A., A.K.C.,
TONGE, MIDDLETON, LANCs.

'They were all together in one place.'—Ac 2¹ (R.V.).

One of the main reasons why Germany has been able to acquire such large stretches of territory with

very little cost to herself during the last few years, has been because she has been able to persuade the countries she has threatened that she was overwhelmingly powerful and that they were exceedingly weak. When power is used for evil ends it becomes a terrifying thing. The manager of a mill or a head clerk in an office who selfishly asserts his authority can make, and often does make, the lives of his subordinates well-nigh intolerable. We have all known the feeling of utter impotence as we have faced one who has held a slightly higher position than our own. Power is a dreadful weapon, and when it is wielded by evil men, as it is to-day, it can cause the whole world to tremble. At the same time we have to remember that power by itself is completely non-moral. Power as such is neither good nor bad. It is the ends for which it is used which determines its character. What we need more than anything else to-day is power used by good men for good purposes. But our trouble is that good men seem to be so frightfully weak. Very few would doubt the sincerity or the goodness of men like the Pope of Rome or even Marshal Pétain, but in the face of the overwhelming powers of evil they seem to be absolutely impotent. When we turn from leaders of the nations to ordinary men and women the same truth applies. No one would suggest that Christian men and women can normally be described as powerful. They find it hard to face ridicule or even argument. We all need to be reinforced by some power other than our own. The odds against us seem to be too great. The forces of evil seem to be too strong. That was exactly the position of the disciples before Pentecost. They were weak men faced by a terrifying situation. They had a message but they dare not proclaim it. God had revealed Himself to them but they were frightened to make it known. And we are told that at that time 'they were all together in one place.' In those few words we have laid down the conditions for our receiving power. The disciples fulfilled those conditions and the day of Pentecost was the result. Pentecost was never meant to be kept merely as a festival of the Church. If only Christians to-day were willing to fulfil those same conditions Pentecost could become their daily experience.

Obedience.—'The disciples were all together in one place,' because Jesus had told them to be. At His Ascension He had commanded them to go back to Jerusalem and wait until the Comforter came. And there is no doubt that if they had not obeyed that command the Comforter would never have come to them and they would never have realized His tremendous power in their lives. Obedience is the

¹ E. Griffith-Jones, *The Unspeakable Gift*, 240.

primary condition of power. God never wastes His energy. He only gives His power to be used in the direction He wants it to be used. A man can waste his own energy and power and God will not stop him, but if a man wants God's power he must learn to be obedient. A soldier will listen to the commands of his officer and obey him implicitly. An employee will do exactly as his employer instructs him. The power of an army would be thwarted and industry would be immobilized if there were disobedience in the ranks. And yet we expect God's work to be done without reference to His commands. We shall have to learn afresh that obedience is the secret of power. The paralytic found power to rise up and carry his mat when he obeyed the Lord's command. The man who had waited thirty-eight years to be healed by the waters of the Pool of Bethesda experienced a power in his life, which he had never before realized, when Christ told him to get up and walk and he obeyed. Jesus Himself received power to face the terrors of the Cross when He said, 'Not my will but thine be done.' If ever we are going to receive power to rebuild this devastated world we shall have to begin by a simple act of obedience, and, as it is revealed to us, carry out the will of God for ourselves and the whole community.

Unity.—'The disciples were all together in one place,' we are told, when the Holy Spirit came. This reveals not only that they were ready to obey, but also that they were united together into a fellowship where jealousy and pride, selfishness and bitterness had been abandoned. Power can never descend upon a disunited community. The strength of the British Empire has been founded on the united efforts of all the peoples of the Commonwealth. In the face of possible disaster and the threat to our freedom we have abandoned all our individual desires in order that we may strike forcibly at the common enemy. We have recognized that power demands unity. The same truth applies to the Church. The Body of Christ can never function powerfully in the world while there is disunity among its members. That does not mean that there must be uniformity amongst all the churches. Power can flow through a variety of channels, but barriers are immediately set up when any disunity is introduced. Re-union has become not an ideal for the future but a practical necessity for the present. The bombing of churches and chapels has enforced the use of each other's buildings by various denominations. Perhaps in the Providence of God what we could not do for ourselves Hitler's 'blitzkrieg' is doing for us. Years ago it was discovered in the Mission Field that Christianity must come before churchmanship. Sheer necessity

is compelling us to learn that same lesson here in this country. And as the churches are drawn closer together the more will they discover that power is given to them. The peoples of the world have been looking for a long time for some source of power and because of our divisions we have denied them what they have longed to find. Once again an opportunity is being offered to us, and this time we must not fail. Our divisions must be healed and our disunities broken down so that the power of the Holy Spirit may flow freely through the Church.

Expectancy.—The Holy Spirit, however, did not only come because the disciples were obedient, nor even because they were united; it is extremely doubtful if anything would have happened if they had not expected that it would. As they waited in that Upper Room, consecrated as it may have been by the first celebration of the Lord's Supper, their thoughts would naturally dwell upon the events of His life and what had happened since His death. They were men who had learned by heart long passages in the Old Testament, and some would remember the prophecy of Joel when he said: 'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.' They probably did not know what it all meant, but it made them expectant. And expectancy is one of the conditions of power. When John Wesley, D. L. Moody, General Booth, Wilson Carlisle, and all the great evangelists prayed that the power of the Holy Spirit should be made manifest in their Revival Meetings, they expected that their prayer would be answered, and it was. William Carey was right when he challenged the Baptist Assembly to 'Expect great things from God, Attempt great things for God.' This faithless generation does not expect that anything of a supernatural nature will happen, and the result is that it does not, or at least, it occurs very infrequently. And yet if we examine the cures which Jesus made of the blind and the deaf, the halt and the lame, the sick and the lepers, in every case the people who were brought to Him expected that something would happen and that somehow they would be cured. They had heard of the great Healer; their hopes were raised; and Jesus stimulated their expectancy until it became faith, and through faith in Him they were cured. 'Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God.' This ought to become the motto for this age and generation. Great things must be done if ever the new age is to be born. Power must flow out through the Church into the world. The disciples discovered the secret

of receiving power; 'they were all together in one place.' We too must learn to be obedient. We must be united in a firmer fellowship, and then, if we really are expectant, God's power will be made manifest.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

Cast Not Away Your Confidence.

'Cast not away therefore your confidence.'—He 10³⁶.

Your confidence, that is, that God reigns and rules. Your confidence that He purposes the kingdom, and that in the long run His purposes cannot know defeat.

It was a word which the people to whom this letter was addressed needed rather urgently. They were second-generation Christians. The first, fine, careless rapture of the early days had died away. And this whole letter was written simply to stir up their hearts again. 'Cast not away your confidence' is the plea of almost every chapter.

It is a word, which, surely, we of to-day need almost as much. We are finding it desperately hard to keep our confidence, our conviction of God, our certainty of the Kingdom's triumph. If we care for the Church of Jesus Christ, we are hard put to it sometimes to believe in its future. In Russia, we see that Church officially proscribed. In Germany, we see it in chains. In our own land, we see it largely neglected. Only the other day, a leading Methodist said that to many of his denomination's younger ministers all talk about reviving the Methodist Church was 'like painting the ship while it was slowly going down.' If, in our youth, we caught a vision, as many of us did, of the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth when war and every other kind of oppression should cease, we find it tragically difficult to believe in that vision now. And, perhaps, in our own private experience, the shine has rather gone off life.

If we do cast away our confidence, we are really as good as finished. For, as Emerson put it, 'only they can conquer who believe they can.' Writing from the liner on which he was travelling with the last Australian 'test' team, Mr. Neville Cardus, the cricket correspondent, remarked on Bradman's supremacy not only at cricket but at every game he took part in on that ship. He had spoken about it one day, he said, to one of the other Australians, to receive the reply, 'You see, when you play against Bradman, you are playing not only against his superb skill but against his colossal confidence as well.'

But the writer of this epistle is not content merely to urge his readers not to cast away their confidence. He goes on to give them some very definite reasons why they should not.

For one thing, he says, 'call to remembrance the former days.' The days, that is, when the Christian Church first began: the days which immediately succeeded Pentecost. Call to remembrance what happened then. The Spirit that descended, the lives that were changed, the fellowship that abounded, the churches that sprang up. Call to remembrance those great days and realize that circumstances were not easier then, that God was not more powerful and active then, that what He did then He still can do now, if only you have the faith to trust Him.

Very often in the Bible we come upon this call to remembrance. 'Remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath led thee,' was Moses' counsel to the children of Israel when they were tempted to lose heart on their journey to the promised land. 'Do ye not remember?' once asked Jesus of His disciples when they seemed completely to have forgotten His amazing powers.

Wherefore, when we in our day are beginning to lose all hope and confidence, let us sit down and deliberately call to mind the former days. Call to mind the story of the Christian Church. Remember how again and again in the past that Church has seemed to be at the point of death, but God has raised up some prophetic soul and the Church has found new and more glorious life. It did under the inspired touch of Luther and Calvin and Knox in the sixteenth century. It did again under the touch of Wesley in the eighteenth. Call to mind, above all, to use another phrase of the writer of this epistle, the days in which we ourselves first 'were illuminated.' Whenever Ralph Erskine felt his faith slipping from him, he would go back in memory to a holiday he had once spent in his youth at Portmoak, when again and again God had drawn so near to him, he could almost see and hear Him: 'Yonder at the hillside, and yonder on the top of the mountain, and yonder in the east room, and yonder in the west room, and yonder in the low room, when He made my heart to go after Him.'

Then, as a further reason for their not casting away their confidence, the writer of this epistle insists 'steady patience is what you need.' 'The trouble is,' as old General Booth used to complain, 'God is not in a hurry but I am.' Dictators can build a new order in a hurry and that is part of their appeal. But God is not a modern Dictator

working with secret police and concentration camps, destroying all who stand in His way. God is the supreme Democrat, who ever respects men and men's personalities. He is ever working for the establishment of His Kingdom, but that Kingdom is one which men consent to enter of their own free choice. He has given them the gift of free-will, that gift which makes them men and not slaves, and never will He violate it, however long they may strain His patience. Hence His methods of working in this world will never be of the violent and catastrophic kind. They will always be quiet and unobtrusive. By His living Spirit He will keep up a constant pressure on men's hearts. By those who have surrendered their lives to that Spirit He will utter His truth and further His purpose. By the faithful lifting up of the Crucified and Risen Christ, He will ever be calling men to His way. Ever will He be working, but ever with infinite quietness and patience.

And if sometimes we feel that His methods are so patient as to be achieving almost nothing at all, then in imagination we should try to climb to some vantage-point from where we can see the whole panorama of history stretched out before us. 'The lesson of life,' says Emerson, 'is to believe what the years and the centuries say, against the hours.' Take a postage stamp, suggests Sir James Jeans, and stick it on a penny. Let the thickness of the penny represent the time man has existed in an uncivilized state, the thickness of the stamp the time he has been civilized. Then go on sticking on postage stamps until you have a pile as high as Mont Blanc, and that pile will give you some idea of the future which still stretches before us. 'We,' he goes on, 'are living at the very beginning of time. . . . Our descendants of far-off ages, looking down this long vista of time from the other end, will see our present age as the misty morning of the world's history; our contemporaries of to-day will appear as dim heroic figures who fought their way through jungles of ignorance, error, and superstition to discover truth, to learn how to harness the forces of Nature, and to make a world worthy for mankind to live in.'

The city which we seek cannot be builded in a day. It is a city of free men, of those who of their own deliberate choice have listed to live together as brethren. Our task is simply to lay whatever stone

is put in our hand and leave the ultimate result to God.

But, above all, pleads this writer, when you are tempted to cast away your confidence, 'look unto Jesus.'

Consider Jesus, then, just as the greatest of all the workers for the Kingdom. As His days on earth neared their close, what few results He saw for all His labours! But He never cast away His confidence. No, quietly He committed His spirit into the Father's hands, confident that if He were lifted up, He would, in that Father's own time, draw all men unto Him. Would we dare to say He was deluded in such a quiet confidence? Surely, as Dr. Maltby often puts it, 'there is at least far more reason to mistrust our own blindness than to mistrust His certainty.'

Still more, consider Jesus as a great objective fact of history. As real a fact as any Caesar or Napoleon or modern dictator, as real as any slaughter-breathing bomber or tank. How can we explain Him? His very appearance on the earth, His serene faith, His love even unto the Cross, His rising again, His continued Presence with men?

'There was a time during the war,' writes Professor H. H. Farmer, 'when the black, irrational horror and cruelty of it laid hold of the soul and plunged it into shuddering unbelief. . . . There was only this anchor to the soul at such a time, that out of the midst of the same world as had produced the war, had come the perfect love of Jesus, proved up to the hilt by His Cross; and that love had been utterly and absolutely sure of God's to the end. One faced the choice as to whether Jesus or the war misrepresented God. And the answer came from the depths of the soul, filling it with light: not Jesus, not Jesus. Such love could not be nourished by a lie.' It could not. The only reasonable explanation of the fact of Jesus is the Fourth Gospel's 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.'

Wherefore, as you value your soul, cast not away your confidence. Call to remembrance the former days, the deeds which God wrought then. Realize that the Kingdom by its very nature must come slowly, but it comes. Above all, look unto Jesus and catch courage and faith from His life and death and rising again.¹

¹ G. T. Bellhouse, *Our Sufficient Beauty*, 84.

Texts and Contexts.

BY THE REVEREND PHILIP S. WATSON, M.A., GLASGOW.

THERE is a principle, universally approved in theory, but in practice too often ignored, that a text, if it is to be rightly understood, should not be isolated from its context. Quoted in such isolation, a word, or phrase, or sentence may, and frequently does, convey a meaning other than that intended by its author. Although its sense appears quite unambiguous, and there is no intention to mislead, its real import can be obscured or even reversed. This danger is especially great when a well-known statement is cited at second or third hand, without reference to its original setting; for it is the context alone, the immediate context in which it is written or spoken, or the wider context of its author's thought, that gives to the text its precise significance.

The need to go 'back to the sources' is aptly illustrated by Luther's much quoted verdict on the Epistle of James. St. James, as every theological student knows, wrote 'an epistle of straw.' So, at least, Martin Luther declared; and his opinion seems to claim quotation with almost every mention of the Epistle. It by no means commands universal approval, however, and if there are some who commend Luther's sound judgment, many either condemn his perversity or wish to modify his view. What neither his critics nor his advocates generally observe is that Luther has other comments on the Epistle of James, which place the 'epistle of straw' in a rather different light. It is certainly false to say that he 'contemptuously dismissed' the Epistle.

At the close of his *Preface to the New Testament*, Luther writes: 'In a word, St. John's Gospel and his first Epistle, St. Paul's Epistles, especially Romans, Galatians and Ephesians, and St. Peter's first Epistle are the books that show you Christ and teach you all that it is necessary and good for you to know. . . . Therefore St. James' Epistle is really an epistle of straw, compared to them; for it has nothing of the nature of the Gospel about it.' *Compared to them!* Even the most ardent admirers of St. James might concede this judgment. And his detractors could hardly reject Luther's more positive estimate in the *Preface to the Epistles of St. James and St. Jude*, where he says: 'Though this Epistle of St. James was rejected by the ancients, I praise it and hold it a good book, because it sets up no doctrine of men and lays great stress upon God's law. But to state my own opinion about it, though with-

out injury to any one, I consider that it is not the writing of any apostle.' Against apostolic authorship Luther argues first, that 'Flatly against St. Paul and all the rest of Scripture, it ascribes righteousness to works'; and secondly, that 'He names Christ several times, but he teaches nothing about Him, and only speaks of common faith in God,' but 'what does not teach Christ is not apostolic.' The author, says Luther, 'wants to guard against those who relied on faith without works, and is unequal to the task.' 'Therefore,' he concludes, 'I cannot put him among the chief books, though I would not thereby prevent any one from putting him where he pleases and estimating him as he pleases; for there are many good sayings in him.' The Epistle of James may be an 'epistle of straw'; but even straw is not an entirely valueless commodity.

A more striking and more serious instance of neglected contexts is to be found in *The Essence of Plotinus*, a volume of selections from the *Enneads*, compiled by G. H. Turnbull. Here a passage concerning the nature of God is rendered thus: 'He is at the same time lovable and Love itself. God's being and His seeking are identical; once more, then, the Supreme is the self-producing, sovereign of Himself.' (Enn. VI, viii. 15, p. 210). A compiler's footnote to the first sentence of this passage invites us to compare 'Aristotle whose Prime Mover imparting motion does so "as a thing that is loved." *Metaphysics*, XI, vii. 3. Cf. also *First Epistle of St. John*, iv. 8: "God is love." Also Spenser . . .' Now the comparison with Aristotle and Spenser may be apt enough, but can the same be said of the comparison with 1 John? The suggestion that Plotinus has arrived at the same insight as the New Testament writer is hardly unnatural, when both write: 'God is love'; and at first sight there appears to be no question but that their views are identical. If, however, we turn to the Greek text of Plotinus, and compare it with that of the New Testament, the situation is radically altered.

In the first place, the word here translated 'love' is not the same in the two cases. St. John writes: 'God is *agape*'; Plotinus says: 'God is *eros*.' This fact might not be of great significance, since it is conceivable that the philosopher and the apostle could mean the same thing by their different words. But further examination proves that they do not.

The passage of Plotinus, quoted above, represents a somewhat drastic abbreviation of the Greek original, where the relevant sentence reads in full: 'He is at the same time lovable and Love itself, that is, love of Himself, as He is beautiful only from Himself and in Himself.' God is *eros*, that is, *love of Himself*, says Plotinus; God is *agape*, says St. John, and 'Herein is *agape*, not that we loved God, but that *He loved us*' (1 Jn 4¹⁰).

God loves Himself, declares Plotinus; God loves us, declares St. John. God's being and His seeking are identical, according to the philosopher, for what is there for Him to seek, what could be worthy of His desire, which He does not already possess in Himself? Only God is worthy to be loved by the self-sufficient God. The apostle starts from different premisses, premisses which he shares in common with the rest of the New Testament. Not philosophical self-sufficiency, but the Incarnate Word, the Crucified Son, is the source of his thought about God. 'Hereby know we *agape*, because He laid down His life for us' (1 Jn 3¹⁶). And St. Paul insists that He died, not for those who were worthy of His sacrifice, but for the utterly unworthy: 'God commendeth His own love (*agape*) toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Ro 5⁸). In the New Testament God's being and His seeking are not identical, for *agape* 'seeketh not its own' (1 Co 13⁵). So the views of Plotinus and St. John are not identical either. Indeed, they are as opposed as the night is to the day.

As a third example of the danger of isolated quotation we may take a famous saying from St. Augustine about the authority of the Church. It is found in the *Contra Epistolam quam vocant Fundamenti*, v. 6: 'Ego vero Evangelio non crederem, nisi me catholicae Ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas.' Writing of Augustine's doctrine of the Church, Dr. Bethune-Baker says: 'The Church of which he speaks is the outward and visible society . . . which had made its irresistible appeal to him and convinced him of the truth of the Gospel.' He then refers to the statement quoted above, and comments: 'Faith rests, for Augustine, on authority; and authority is embodied in the visible Church . . .' (J. F. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine*, 368). But any one familiar with Augustine's own account of his spiritual pilgrimage in the *Confessions* should surely find reason to question these assertions. The authority of the Church played little, if any, part in his 'conversion'; for he came to Christianity, as he explains, through Neoplatonism, to which he found the gospel much akin, though far superior. The evidence of

the *Confessions* seems to contradict that of the *C. Ep. Fundamenti*—and yet both works were written in the same year.

Here, again, the context provides the solution of the problem. The *C. Ep. Fundamenti* is a refutation, mainly in the form of a dialogue, of Manichæan claims. In this dialogue Augustine deliberately adopts the position of an ordinary, simple Christian, who takes his stand on authority. Deliberately leaving aside that 'purest wisdom' which the Church possesses, but which is attained by only a few 'spiritual persons,' he recognizes that the majority derive their security, not from 'acuteness of intellect, but simplicity of faith.' Even so, he asserts, there are many excellent reasons for remaining in the Catholic Church. These he enumerates, including the Church's authority as one important reason among the rest. In comparison with these weighty considerations, what has the Manichæan to offer? Can he adduce any authority as convincing as that of the Catholic? At this point the dialogue proper begins.

The *Ep. Fundamenti*, which Augustine is attacking, claims to be written by 'Manichæus, an apostle of Jesus Christ.' But the Christian says he does not believe Manichæus to be an apostle; and how is it to be proved? Will the Manichæan try to find evidence in the gospel? Such evidence will be valueless for any one who does not believe the gospel; and the Christian will refuse to admit the existence of such evidence. The same Church on whose authority he believes the gospel, forbids him to believe Mani, and he has more reason to accept the Church's authority than that of the Manichæans. It is in this context the statement is made: 'But I, for my part, would not believe the Gospel, did not the authority of the catholic Church induce me.'

From the above sketch of its context, it should be clear that the significance of the statement in question is less far-reaching than is often assumed. It is not propounded as a dogmatic principle, but is merely a single link in a controversial argument of some length; and 'I' is not St. Augustine, or at least not Augustine speaking in his own person, but as a simple Christian believer. There is thus no real discrepancy between this statement and the witness of the *Confessions*, since it does not describe Augustine's own experience. It was not the authority of the Church which 'convinced him of the truth of the gospel.' And even if, for Augustine's simple Christian, 'faith rests on authority . . . embodied in the visible Church,' no blind submission to that authority is implied. There are good and rational grounds for accepting it. But the authority

of the Church is, for Augustine, only one consideration among others, and he finds deeper and surer evidence for the Christian Faith in that *sincerissima sapientia*, 'purest wisdom,' to which, unfortunately, but a few attain. St. Augustine is evidently not such an authoritarian as he can be made to appear.

A final example of the principle under discussion may be found in Luther's much discussed *pecca fortiter*, 'Sin bravely!' This startling injunction has caused considerable embarrassment to Lutherans and no little scandal elsewhere. It looks like a direct invitation to abandon moral restraint; it might be a watchword of the antinomians. Yet in his condemnation of antinomianism Luther is at least as severe as his critics (cf., e.g. *Works of Luther*, v. 234 f., 265, 268 f.). He will not allow the preaching of justification without sanctification, of Easter without Pentecost, of forgiveness without the gift of the Holy Ghost. What, then, are we to make of his *pecca fortiter*? Perhaps he did not really mean what he said—said it ironically, perhaps? On the contrary: he meant it quite literally; but what he actually meant, only the passage from which it comes and the background of his thought can explain.

In Luther's view, a Christian believer is a saved sinner, not a sinless saint. He is *simul justus et peccator*: in himself a sinner, but righteous in Christ. And he remains a sinner even after he is 'justified,' accepted by God, and even when he has received the Holy Ghost; he is never 'sanctified,' in this life at least, in such a way that he ceases to be a sinner. Always his acceptance with God is grounded upon God's grace and love alone, never upon anything that he himself does or ever will do. And nothing that a man ever does in this life can be wholly free from the taint of sin. Nevertheless, God's grace and love towards him remain the same; they cannot be purchased by his righteousness nor forfeited by his sinfulness; they can only be accepted in faith or rejected by unbelief. Against this background we must read the passage containing the *pecca fortiter*.

'If you are a preacher of grace,' writes Luther, 'preach not imaginary but real grace; if the grace is real, let it bear real and not imaginary sin. God does

not save imaginary sinners. Be a sinner and sin bravely, but more bravely trust and rejoice in Christ, who is vanquisher of sin, death, and the world. We are bound to sin as long as we are here; this life is not a habitation of righteousness, but we look, says Peter, for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is enough that we know . . . the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world; from Him sin shall not sever us, even though we were to commit fornication or murder a thousand thousand times in one day' (in K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsätze*, i. 235). This language is extravagant, and it may be perilous if misunderstood; but Luther is not a modern man, writing for an age when 'God will forgive, for that is His job,' nor is he here concerned with the antinomianism of his own time. He is writing rather against the opposite error, against a religious legalism which makes sanctification the basis of justification, and a man's good works the ground of his acceptance with God. But to do that is to be like the Pharisee in the parable, standing on his own merits in the presence of God. Such a man has no part in Christ, who 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners.' It is at our peril that we claim any righteousness of our own, for to do so is virtually to say: 'At this or that point in my life I have no need of Christ, no need of God's grace and forgiving love.' So 'be a sinner, and sin bravely,' says Luther; 'but more bravely trust and rejoice in Christ, who is vanquisher of sin.' His language may be extravagant, but his meaning is not more offensive than Jesus's invitation to sinners, or Paul's message of the justification of the ungodly. The only scandal it contains is the scandal of the Cross, on which 'while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.'

In conclusion we may perhaps recall that Satan is believed sometimes to quote Scripture. When he does so, however, the sacred text rarely retains its divine significance; for Satan has little interest in that. If he quotes, it is to support his own argument, to gain his own point. He therefore takes very little account of either the immediate or the remoter context of his text, which he is then able to expound in whatever manner he chooses.

Recent Foreign Theology.

Redemption and Forgiveness in the Old Testament.

It will be generally agreed that if we are to understand any of the great Christian doctrines, we must at least take into account the beliefs and practices of Israel as described in the Old Testament. This is, perhaps, especially true when we try to formulate a doctrine of the Atonement, a theme on which Hebrew religion had so much to say. The terminology of the New Testament is here largely based on language used in the Old Testament, and, while it is inevitable that we should find much that is new in the implications of the former, it is also clear that the later developments grew out of the older views and still retain something of their significance. We may, then, welcome any thorough and scholarly study of the Old Testament attitude towards redemption and forgiveness, and should give careful and close attention to such a statement of the matter as that provided by the Swiss scholar, Johann Jakob Stamm, in his recent *Erlösen und Vergeben im Alten Testament*.¹ His work falls into two parts, of which the first is more strictly philological, while the second deals with the theological application of the terms studied. It is not the least of Dr. Stamm's merits that he keeps clear the distinction between the two ideas of Redemption and Forgiveness, which had independent histories down to the time of the Exile, and were first combined in the teaching of Deutero-Isaiah. In each case he takes two characteristic terms, and studies them, with further reference to other images and metaphors. Redemption is indicated more specifically by the roots PDH and G'L, both of which originate in legal phraseology, but while the former belongs to the realm of commerce, the latter is taken

¹ A. Francke AG., Verlag, Bern ; 8 fr.

from the vocabulary of family law. In general, however, both have much the same meaning, since both involve the payment of a price. This element, however, quickly falls into the background when the terms are used in a religious context, and they come to mean simply deliverance, though always from danger, never from sin. As a rule, there is some definite historical or eschatological peril in view ; from the time of Deuteronomy onwards, for instance, both may be applied to the Exodus, while after the Exile we find a tendency to use them with reference to the final catastrophe which shall mark the end of the age. The conclusions thus reached are borne out by the use of other words and metaphors. The two words which particularly imply Forgiveness are ŠLḤ and KPPR. The former always implies the remission or deduction of punishment, the latter originally indicates the 'covering' of sin—a conclusion reached only after a detailed study of the evidence afforded by comparative philology. Both terms are connected primarily with the cultus, and with them is associated a number of important expressions such as 'take away sin,' 'cause sin to pass away,' 'cover sin' (root KSH), 'wipe away sin' (root MHH), 'wash,' 'purify,' and others. These conclusions, reached in the first part of the book, are developed in the second part, where their history is traced through successive stages in Old Testament literature. There may be room for difference of opinion on individual points (the root meaning of KPPR will serve as an outstanding example), but it is not easy to overrate the value of such a study as this. It is marked by thoroughness, clarity of expression, and freedom from any presuppositions, and should prove a most valuable contribution to any attempt at restating the Christian doctrine of the Atonement.

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Contributions and Comments.

Hebrews iv. 11.

IN commenting on He 4¹¹ Dr. Moffatt (*ICC*, 53) says that the author here drops the subject of 'rest' and never refers to it again. In working over the Book of Hebrews it seems to me that this is a mis-

take. It is not the method of the author to take up a subject or sub-division of his thought, treat it fully, and then go on and forget about it.

While the author of Hebrews used the Septuagint and therefore probably did not know the different Hebrew words from which the Greek translations

of 'katapausin' and 'anapausin' come, yet a glance at the words שָׁכַח and נָחַח, is interesting and instructive. The first, taken from Gn 2² and giving the idea that we usually associate with 'rest' 'cessation of labour,' is combined with the second, which, while translated 'rest' in the A.V. has a much different meaning from that of mere cessation of labour or refreshment after toil. The meaning is that of 'settling down and remaining' (Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Hebrew Lex.*) whether temporarily or for a long time. The word 'rest' also has this meaning, but in many of the places in the Bible unless particular care is given to get the thought the other meaning is likely to be taken. But the thought of settling down or coming into a place of abode is necessary for a proper understanding of just what is meant. Thus in Josh 1^{13, 15} Joshua tells the people that God has given them a place of settling down, an abode, and the American Translation renders it 'home.' Likewise Ex 33¹⁴, 'I will lead you and give you a place of rest,' that is, a home, a place to settle down; and Dt 3²⁰. The use of the word in Dt 5¹⁴ surely gives us a picture of the strenuous life of servants, beasts of burden, and the masters as well, who on the Sabbath find a chance to settle down for a moment in some place. Again, no woman of that day, and perhaps few of the common people to-day, would expect a woman to find 'rest' in getting married. But if it is taken as a place of security or settling down then the thought of Naomi in regard to Ruth becomes illuminating (Ru 1⁹). But still more germane for our subject are the passages in Dt 12⁹: 'You have not yet reached the home and heritage' (Amer. Trans.); 1 Ch 6³¹, 'After the ark had rest'; 1 Ch 28², 'I had it in mind to build a house of rest for the ark.' In the first passage the synonymous use of rest or 'home' and 'inheritance' makes the meaning plain whether one knows Hebrew or not. The last two passages show clearly the idea of a place of settling down and a knowledge of Hebrew is unnecessary to get the thought.

So when the author of Hebrews quotes Ps 95¹¹ is it too much to think that he probably had this idea of a home or settled abode in mind? Indeed, is it not likely that he did? Does not this thought of 'rest' connect most closely with He 11⁸⁻¹⁰, where Abraham, who lived in tents, an unsettled life, looked for 'the city with the sure foundations, whose architect and builder is God'? Again, in He 11¹³⁻¹⁶, we have the picture of dwellers in alien lands 'seeking their fatherland.' In 12²²⁻²⁹, 'We have come to the city of the living God,' and 'Let us who have received a Kingdom which cannot be shaken.' Surely all these are positive proof that the

author did not drop the subject of rest after his treatment of it in chs. 3 and 4.

If ch. 13 is by the author, then in 13¹⁴, 'For we have no permanent city here, but we are seeking for the city that is to be,' is further proof of the author's thought. And ch. 9¹⁵⁻¹⁷, with its idea of a will and an inheritance, may be considered as in the same line of thought.

It seems to me that the above idea of a permanent abode can be applied with telling effect to the parable of the unclean spirit (Mt 12⁴³⁻⁴⁵). The spirit seeks 'rest,' a permanent dwelling-place, but, being unable to find it, comes back and settles down for good in the heart of the man from whom it had gone out.

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St. Mark x. 36.

OF the numerous variant readings of this verse, the following are the most important:

(a) τί θέλετε ποιήσω ὑμῖν; (C D) which is adopted by Westcott-Hort, and by E. P. Gould (ICC).

(b) τί θέλετε ποιῆσαί με ὑμῖν; (T.R.) which A. B. Bruce has in his text.

(c) τί θέλετέ με ποιήσω ὑμῖν; (8 * B arm) which is recommended by Wohlenberg,¹ and regarded by Holtzmann,² Klostermann,³ and Swete⁴ (who, however, puts με in brackets) as a mixture of the two constructions of θέλειν with the deliberate subjunctive, and with the accusative and infinitive (a and b above).

The usual explanation of the origin of these variants is that the original text was τί θέλετε ποιήσω ὑμῖν. A later copyist, not understanding the construction, though it is common enough in the New Testament, corrected it to the simpler τί θέλετε ποιῆσαί με ὑμῖν. These two readings were then naturally confused, with the resultant rendering τί θέλετέ με ποιήσω ὑμῖν. A. B. Bruce⁵ supports this text, saying that it 'is accredited by its very grammatical peculiarity,' and regards the variants as corrections of it. 'For ποιῆσαί με B has με ποιήσω; C D correct by omitting με; A L Δ Σ by changing it into the infinitive and accusative, as in T.R.' The reading of B cannot, however,

¹ Zahn's *Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament*, ii. 284.

² *Hand-Commentar Zum Neuen Testament*, i. 159.

³ Lietzmann's *Handbuch Zum N.T.*, ii. (I), 88.

⁴ *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 236.

⁵ 'Synoptic Gospels,' in *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, 413.

stand, for the presence of the accusative $\mu\epsilon$ before the deliberate subjunctive $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\omega$ seems to be anomalous. I know of no similar example, and the only reference to this construction I have come across is Nunn, *Syntax of N.T. Greek*, sect. 122, where it is said that the use (of the deliberate subjunctive) occurs even when words are inserted between $\theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\iota\upsilon$ and the subjunctive; but the only example given is the B text of Mk 10³⁶. It appears, therefore, that this reading is too unusual to be accepted with confidence. Is there a solution to its origin, besides the explanation of conflation?

Wellhausen¹ accepts the reading of D, which omits $\tau\acute{\iota} \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\tau\epsilon$, and renders, 'Ich will es euch tun.' Rawlinson² thinks the omission accidental. The reading of D, $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\omega \dot{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$, suggests another solution of the origin of the B text. Might not the original reading have been $\tau\acute{\iota} \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\tau\epsilon \mu\epsilon \pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\alpha\iota$; $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\omega \dot{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$? If so, haplography would easily, and obviously, owing to the juxtaposition of $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\alpha\iota$ and $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\omega$ result, respectively, in $\tau\acute{\iota} \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\tau\epsilon \mu\epsilon \pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\alpha\iota \dot{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$ (N^c L, the original order, no doubt, $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\alpha\iota \mu\epsilon$ of T.R. being merely a case of transposition), and $\tau\acute{\iota} \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\tau\epsilon \mu\epsilon \pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\omega \dot{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$. The latter would then soon have been corrected either into $\mu\epsilon \pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\alpha\iota$ or $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\omega$ (so Bruce). This suggested text also makes the omission of the first clause, resulting in the D text, quite easy and natural as a case of haplography.

It is true that with this suggested reading, we get what at first appears a startling statement from the lips of Jesus. 'What do you wish me to do? I will do it for you!' It seems to be a rash response. But is it so startling or so rash as it seems?

There is a striking parallelism in the sequences of events recorded in the two passages of Mk 8²⁹⁻³³, and 10²⁸⁻³⁸. In the former, there is first Peter's confession of loyalty to his master. Then (in the

parallel passage in Mt 16¹⁵⁻¹⁹) there is expressed the joy of Jesus at His disciple's loyalty, and great promises of reward—the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and the power of binding and loosing, *i.e.* he is to rule the Church. Then follows a prediction of the sufferings, rejection, and death of the Son of Man. Peter protests, and receives the rebuke of Jesus that he is not spiritually, but worldly minded. In the latter, there comes first a declaration, voiced by Peter, of the loyalty of the disciples. 'Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.' This is followed by the joy of Jesus expressed in the promise of rewards to His disciples. In the parallel passage in Mt 10²⁷⁻²⁹ they are promised twelve thrones from which they will judge the twelve tribes of Israel; *i.e.* they are to rule the Church (cf. Mt 16¹⁹). Then follows a prediction of the sufferings and death of the Son of Man. And then come James and John with their request, and the enthusiastic and ready response of Jesus. 'What do you wish me to do? I will do it for you!' At this point Jesus is displaying the same spirit of joy which recognized the loyalty of the disciples with promises of infinite reward; and the same spirit which Matthew's Gospel, with true insight, attributes to Him in His words to Peter, 'Blessed art thou' (16¹⁷). But on learning their desire He was disappointed, and rebuked them. 'Ye know not what ye ask.' It was power and distinction they wanted. They had not taken to heart His warnings of the approaching sufferings. It was the same with Peter. He shrank from the very idea that there would be suffering.

The suggested reading of Mk 10³⁶, $\tau\acute{\iota} \theta\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\epsilon\tau\epsilon \mu\epsilon \pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\alpha\iota$; $\pi\omega\iota\eta\sigma\omega \dot{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$, brings out the enthusiastic willingness of Jesus in response to the request of the sons of Zebedee, only to be followed by disappointment, disillusionment, and a rebuke.

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¹ *Die drei ersten Evangelien*, iii. 89.

² *The Gospel according to St. Mark*, 145.

Entre Nous.

Our Sufficient Beauty.

At a time when most publishers are holding back from publishing volumes of sermons, Messrs. James Clarke & Co. have adventured with three really fine collections. In the January number we spoke

of two of these—*Christian Intimacies*, by the Rev. George J. Jeffrey, and *Captain of the Storm*, by the Rev. Arthur A. Cowan. This month we have *Our Sufficient Beauty*, by the Rev. G. T. Bellhouse, B.D. (5s. net). When he was at Regent Square, Mr.

Bellhouse published a distinctive volume, but we think this is his first since he went to Westbourne Church, Glasgow. The title is taken from Mr. H. G. Wells' 'The History of Mr. Polly,' 'Man comes into life to seek and find his sufficient beauty.' It is in the last sermon, 'We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ,' that we find this quotation made use of. In the second half of the opening chapter of St. John's Gospel there is described how five men, two together and the other three separately, came to find their 'sufficient beauty,' even Jesus Christ. Apart from the first two they all found Him along different paths. In a very fresh way Mr. Bellhouse describes these ways to Christ. Andrew and John had earlier contacts—the preaching of John the Baptist. Peter, vivid, impulsive, most at home in a boat on the lake, what was he won by? By Jesus' faith in him. And Philip? He did not come to Jesus. Rather Jesus went to him. He is the typically practical individual. He was won by the practicality of the Master. A complete contrast in temperament was Nathanael. He was the sort of man who was always tortured by problems. What won him? 'It was surely that he felt that this Teacher felt all the things he felt, felt all the pain and misery and injustice of this world as though they were His own, and yet, in spite of it, was able to believe and say "Father." This surely is the significance of Jesus' remark, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Under that fig tree, Nathanael had been wrestling with one of his perennial problems. And Jesus felt for him and longed to help. And Nathanael felt He could help.'

Life Consisteth Not.

'Possessions work oppression. Possessions tyrannize over a man, compel him to attend to them, or contrariwise they clog his consciousness by the dead weight of their indifference and inertia. English middle-class houses of the last generation were heavy with sheer accumulation; suitable and unsuitable, useful and useless, grotesque and picturesque, lay down together on floors, mantel-pieces, cabinets and the like, the sole justification for their convergence being that they were the possessions of a certain householder. Twentieth-century houses are less encumbered, nevertheless we are all of us occupied with "our things"—"I must pack my things," "I must sort my things," "I must fetch my things," such words are constantly on our lips, and they testify to the concern

that we have for these things of ours. And yet so many of our things mean so little to us. We barely use them, but we insist on carrying the burden of them lest at some time we should want to use them. And we fail to see that in the interval of their disuse they are mere lumber, mere dust. There is, I think, no doubt that the majority of men suffer, consciously or unconsciously, by reason of the things which they possess.'¹

Myth and Truth.

'Truths which break through language and escape, which spread beyond anything we can say of them, are what we call myths. We are inclined to derogate myths to the level of the fairy stories of our childhood, but in this we are indeed grossly mistaken, for "the saner and greater mythologies are not fancies, they are the utterance of the whole soul of man, and, as such, inexhaustible to meditation." . . . The first chapters of Genesis are a fable, you say; yes, but a fable more true than fact. Wittgenstein says, "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must keep silence," and he is right in recognizing that a sea of silence flows round the logician's little island of the explicit. But myth breaks this silence, utters the unutterable symbolically, at one remove, as it were. "Behind the myth are concealed the greatest realities, the original phenomena of the spiritual life."'²

Lord Halifax and General de Gaulle on Missions.

Lord Halifax wrote in a letter to Dr. William Paton: 'I am myself quite clear that the support of foreign missionary work in time of war is an essential part of the Church's witness. I should much regret if the responsibility which Christian people rightly feel towards the special needs and charities that press upon us in war-time should lead them to desert this permanent and universal Christian obligation.'

Mr. Charles Collet, the London secretary of the Paris Missionary Society, has been entrusted with the full responsibility for the Mission fields of the Society in British Africa which are under the administration of General de Gaulle. In reply to requests for facilities for correspondence with the Cameroon and Gaboon Missions, Mr. Collet has received the following letter from General de Gaulle:

¹ E. M. Rowell, *Time and Time Again*.

² *Ibid*.

'I am happy to inform you that there is no obstacle of any sort to the activity of the Evangelical Missions in the territories where they are working. Indeed, as soon as we had finished the occupation of Gaboon, we thought of your missions and of their needs and of the means of giving them the help which they needed, and at the request of the Governor of Gaboon a special credit has been placed at his disposal so as to allow him to help, with both money and supplies, the missionary establishments which are in his territory. The local authorities have my instructions to facilitate, as far as possible, the work of the missionaries of whatever confession in their territories.'

Weymouth New Testaments.

It is interesting to note that there has been some criticism of those in charge of Church of Scotland canteen work for having distributed large numbers of New Testaments in Weymouth's modern translation. A story given in the April number of *Life and Work* from a northern camp is a fair comment on such criticisms. The New Testament had been, not pressed upon the men, but offered to any who came and asked for them. Immediately some thirty-six were applied for—one by a man who was billeted in a hut with five others. Next day he remarked, 'It was jolly interesting. I sat up half the night reading it.' And later his five companions came to ask for copies also. One of them remarked, 'We might as well be reading it for ourselves as have Johnnie reading snatches to us at two o'clock in the morning.'

Programme Not Enough.

'The foundations of our New Jerusalem depend not upon material programmes, but upon the acceptance of the ideal of love as the guiding principle of personal and national life.

'That the change can be accomplished if we really desire it, and that the initiative can come from our own sorrowful but undaunted country I have never doubted, even in its darkest hours of complacency and self-seeking.

'To-day, after witnessing London's endurance of its crucifixion without panic or vindictiveness, I am more than ever confident that the British people—provided that their innate decency is neither destroyed by the propaganda of hatred nor warped by excess of avoidable suffering—are as capable as any people in the world of accepting a way of life determined by love rather than by power.

'We beseech thee to take us as we are, and of thy mercy make us what thou wouldst have us be.'¹

Ignorance of the Average Person.

The *Baptist Times* of 10th April reports that Miss Dorothy Sayers (the well-known writer of 'detectives') spoke the previous week at a meeting of the Baptist Board. She avoided sentiment, except the strong feeling of the tragedy of the sheer ignorance of the average person. Miss Sayers said she had been alarmed by the complete ignorance of children, and others, of the Bible and of Christian truths. Without an understanding of fundamental truths they have no clear way of life. 'A great part of the world has denied the Christian ethic; the other part has forgotten the reason of their faith.' The word 'dogma' was the most frequently repeated in the address: 'This is a world-war of dogma, between two different and contrary explanations of the universe.'

The use of theological terms in the pulpit was emphasized. Ministers must do something about it! Salvation—redemption—worship—communion—these mean something quite different to the minister and the ordinary man. 'The simple Gospel itself is by no means simple.' There is a necessity to teach the people 'some sort of doctrine about the nature of man, what we mean by sinfulness—the internal dislocation within man which roots evil in his good; and the uniqueness of Christianity.'

THE SON.

The manger where He lay
New-born upon the hay,
The bench at which He toiled,
The hands His labour soiled,
The simple words He said,
The multitudes He fed,
The grave by which He sighed,
The Cross on which He died,
His resurrection face
Bright with celestial grace—
All the long way He trod,
Still speaks the love of God.²

¹ Vera Brittain, *England's Hour*.

² R. Glanville, *Jesus and His Passion*.